Tanong ng Bayan/A16

Winston sa GSIS, atbp. Oras na bang bumaba?

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■ **Business / B1**

T-bill rates rise on fears of inflation

■ **News / A14**

Ramiscal travel blocked

■ **News / A2**

Cardinal Sin suffers heart attack

■ **Metro / A16**

Muslim prayer room to rise in Greenhills

■ **Lifestyle / C1**

Cruising to fitness and well-being

2 error-filled textbooks still in use after pullout

KAYA PALA NABO-BOBO ANG MGA BATA! GR

By Dona Z. Pazzibugan

TWO SCIENCE textbooks that were supposedly pulled out three years ago for errors are still being used in public high

2 ERROR-FILLED/ A4

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Tuesday, October 12, 2004 ★★ ~~42~~ 46 pages / 4 sections / vol. 19 / no. 307 P18

Garcia: $100,000 loans from friends

By Fe Zamora

SUSPENDED Maj. General Carlos Garcia told Gen. Narciso Abaya that the $100,000 his son tried to bring into the United States last December was raised through "personal loans from friends here and abroad."

But in a letter to the Fines, Penalties and Forfeiture Office in the United States, Garcia said the amount came from "savings, honoraria and dividends from savings" he made through the years.

Garcia wrote the US office on Jan. 12, 2004. He gave a different explanation in a letter to Abaya on Aug. 2, 2004.

GARCIA/ A14

PORTRAIT of General Garcia

RETIRED Commodore Rex Robles strikes a pensive pose during the hearing of the House committee on national defense on corruption in the military. JOAN BONDOC

VICE Admiral De los Reyes takes his oath before the House committee on national defense. JOAN BONDOC

Probe reaches AFP chief

Solon cites possible violation of Anti-Money Laundering Law

NEIGHBORS say this two-story house under construction at No. 11 Jaime St., Carmel Subdivision, Quezon City, belongs to Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia.

RAFFY LERMA

By Cynthia D. Balana

A CONGRESSIONAL inquiry into alleged corruption in the military has reached the doorstep of Armed Forces Chief of Staff Gen. Narciso Abaya.

Rep. Jaime Lopez (Lakas, Manila) suggested at a House hearing yesterday that Abaya and other officials of the Armed Forces Savings and Loan Association Inc. (AFPSLAI) could be held criminally liable for allegedly failing to report to the Anti-Money Laundering Council the P7-million savings deposit of Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia.

A former Armed Forces comptroller now under suspension, Garcia is facing investigation by the Ombudsman for alleged unexplained wealth.

Lopez, chair of the House committee on banks and financial intermediaries, said officials of the AFPSLAI board of trustees, including its vice president for operations and its cashier, were required by law to submit a report to the AMLC on savings deposits over P500,000.

The board is headed by Abaya.

"It seemed to me that they have violated the law because if there was no report given to the AMLC, since the money involved is more than P500,000, then anyone who fails to make a report is a money launderer by principal participation and, therefore, liable criminally for the offense," Lopez told the hearing held by the House defense committee.

Asked by reporters after the hearing if Abaya should be held liable, being the chair of the AFP-

PROBE/ A14

Graft extends to bond paper and paper clips

By Michael Lim Ubac

BOND paper and paper clips, too.

The "fatal addiction" to money of many military generals, as claimed by retired Navy Commodore Rex Robles, is seemingly insatiable that even office supplies do not escape the web of corruption.

A longtime supplier of the Armed Forces of the Philippines, Jodaar Cottage Industries, yesterday said it was willing to come out in the open and corroborate the corruption allegations of Robles.

Robles found an unlikely ally in Jodaar sales manager Peter Go Cheng, who encouraged him to continue talking despite feelers from his comrades to shut up.

Cheng said that the revived interest in the corruption scandal rocking the Armed Forces of the Philippines should lead to concrete actions.

He said corruption had not been curbed in the AFP because the Feliciano Commission, which President Macapagal-Arroyo had tasked to look into the grievances of the Magdalo soldiers who staged a coup last year, was afraid to "dig deeper."

The businessman cited the case of a small office in J4 (Logis-

GRAFT EXTENDS/ A14

SuperFerry 14 bombing solved—GMA

By Juliet Labog-Javellana and Philip C. Tubeza

POLICE yesterday filed multiple murder charges against six suspected members of the Abu Sayyaf after investigators concluded that the terrorist group was behind February's SuperFerry 14 bombing that killed more than 100 people in the country's worst terrorist attack.

"Today, we have solved the SuperFerry bombing," President Macapagal-Arroyo said at Camp Bagong Diwa in Taguig, Rizal, where she presented two of the six suspects to the media.

"I am now instructing the police and the military to intensify the manhunt for the two masterminds—Khaddafy Janjalani and Abu Soliman— and their two other accomplices," the President said at the press conference.

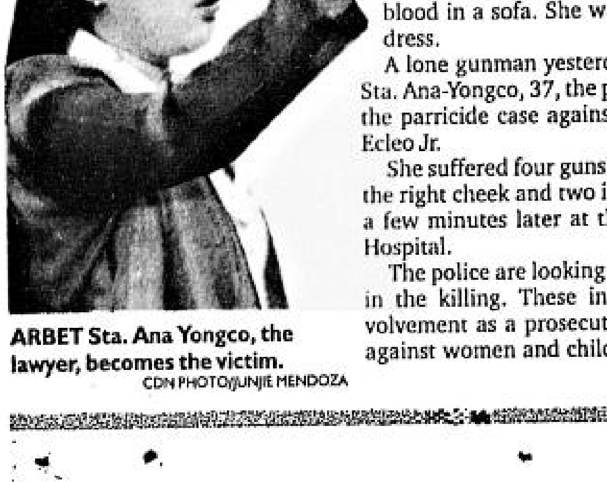
A week after the SuperFerry 14 caught fire and sank off Corregidor Island on Feb. 27, the al-Qaida-linked Abu Sayyaf claimed responsibility for the bombing. But Ms Arroyo, who was running for reelection then, scoffed at the Abu Sayyaf's claim as the work of pranksters.

Transportation Secretary Lean-

SUPERFERRY/ A4

Lawyer in Ecleo killing shot dead in her home

By Jolene R. Bulambot And Jhunnex Napallacan
PDI Visayas Bureau



ARBET Sta. Ana Yongco, the lawyer, becomes the victim.
CDN PHOTO/JUNJIE MENDOZA

CEBU CITY— She was clutching a frame of Bible phrases when her husband found her lying in a pool of blood in a sofa. She was still in her nightdress.

A lone gunman yesterday shot dead Arbet Sta. Ana-Yongco, 37, the private prosecutor in the parricide case against cult leader Ruben Ecleo Jr.

She suffered four gunshot wounds—two in the right cheek and two in the neck. She died a few minutes later at the Perpetual Succor Hospital.

The police are looking into different angles in the killing. These included Yongco's involvement as a prosecutor in cases of abuse against women and children, and in the trial

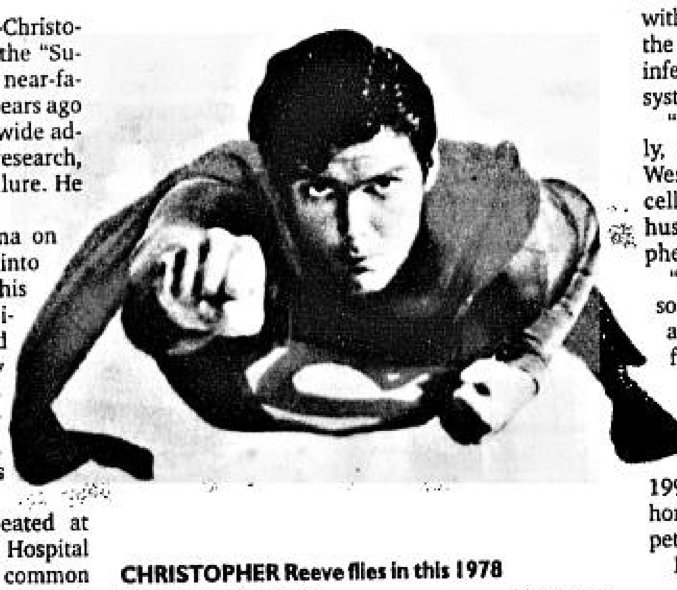
LAWYER/ A4

'Superman' Reeve dies at 52

BEDFORD, New York—Christopher Reeve, the star of the "Superman" movies whose near-fatal riding accident nine years ago turned him into a worldwide advocate for spinal cord research, died Sunday of heart failure. He was 52.

Reeve fell into a coma on Saturday after going into cardiac arrest while at his New York home, his publicist, Wesley Combs, told The Associated Press by phone from Washington, D.C., on Sunday night. When Reeve died, his family was at his side.

Reeve was being treated at Northern Westchester Hospital for a pressure wound, a common complication for people living with paralysis. In the past week, the wound had become severely infected, resulting in a serious systemic infection.



CHRISTOPHER Reeve flies in this 1978 "Superman" movie. REUTERS/FILES

"On behalf of my entire family, I want to thank Northern Westchester Hospital for the excellent care they provided to my husband," Dana Reeve, Christopher's wife, said in a statement.

"I also want to thank his personal staff of nurses and aides, as well as the millions of fans from around the world who have supported and loved my husband over the years."

Reeve broke his neck in May 1995 when he was thrown off his horse during an equestrian competition in Culpeper, Virginia.

Enduring months of therapy to

SUPERMAN/ A4

WEATHER FORECAST

FORECAST: Eastern and Southern Luzon, Visayas and Mindanao will experience cloudy skies with scattered rainshowers and thunderstorms. The rest of the country will be partly cloudy to cloudy with isolated rainshowers and thunderstorms.

SOURCE: PAGASA

COMPILED BY: RAY LEYESA, PDI RESEARCH/10/12/04

Metro Manila	Cloudy with Rains	Iloilo/Bacolod	Cloudy with Rains
Baguio	Partly Cloudy	Roxas	Cloudy with Rains
Tuguegarao	Partly Cloudy	Cebu	Cloudy with Rains
Laoag	Partly Cloudy	Tacloban	Cloudy with Rains
Clark Zone	Cloudy with Rains	Gen. Santos	Cloudy with Rains
Tagaytay	Cloudy with Rains	Zamboanga	Cloudy with Rains
Legazpi	Cloudy with Rains	Cagayan de Oro	Cloudy with Rains
Calapan	Cloudy with Rains	Davao	Cloudy with Rains

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COA audit uncovers errors in DA's books

By Norman Bordadora

THE COMMISSION on Audit has uncovered 11 erroneous entries in the financial statement filed by the Department of Agriculture for 2003, costing the government billions of pesos in funds, according to documents gathered by left-wing party-list and militant groups.

The COA report showed that the total cash balance of P1.709 billion reported by the DA in its financial statement was questionable due to "unreconciled differences" between the book and bank balances, non-existent bank accounts, substantial cash advances and missing bank statements which totaled P438.742 million.

The audit report also said that the DA's inventory balances totaling P970.848 million was dubious because of "unreconciled differences" of P149.435 million between the balance per book and the inventory reports, failure to conduct a physical count of inventory balances, and the absence of documents to support recorded inventory balances of P254.395 million.

Left-wing militant party-list and sectoral groups, however, focused their attention on the P87.9-million allocation for office supplies of former DA Secretary Luis Lorenzo when inventory reports only showed a P1.3-million balance.

"The missing P86 million could have been used to purchase more than 7.2 million kilos of farmers' unmilled rice at P12 a kilo," said Anakpawis Rep. Rafael Mariano in a news conference yesterday.

"Where is the P86 million? Why is it not in the inventory report? Is Cito (Lorenzo) planning to compete with National Bookstore?" asked Kilusang Magbubukid ng Pilipinas secretary general Danilo Ramos.

Ramos said the total "unreconciled difference" between the inventory balance per book and the inventory report of more than P149 million could have been spent for agricultural support services.

The fisherfolk group Pamalakaya, on the other hand, asked why the DA failed to remit more than P190 million in cash balances to the national treasury despite the recommendation of the COA on March 31.

"(The former leadership) in the DA is hereby given an entire week by the Filipino public to explain why over P190 million in taxpayers' money was not remitted to the national treasury despite the recommendation of the COA," said Pamalakaya chair Fernando Hicap.

The COA report on the misstatements of DA's financial statement for 2003 included the following:

- Total cash balance of P1.709 billion was unreliable due to "unreconciled differences."
- Cash accounts were understated by a net amount of P5.377 million because of various errors.
- 3. The validity and existence of receivable accounts amounting to P10.153 billion could not be established due to "unreconciled differences."
- Total receivable accounts were understated by a net of P373.390 million because of failure to record fund transfers, cash advances, liquidations and erroneous entries.
- The property, plant and equipment accounts totaling P45.983 billion were questionable.
- Total PPE accounts were understated by a net of P555.026 million due to erroneous entries, failure to record assets, unauthorized debits and credits.
- Inventory balances totaling P970.848 million were incorrect.
- Total inventory accounts were overstated by a net of P56.638 million due to various accounting errors.
- Current liability accounts totaling P8.815 billion were dubious.
- Total current liabilities accounts were overstated by a net amount of P18.298 million because of erroneous recording and conversion of accounts and non-recording of valid claims and other errors.

JAPANESE ENVOY LEAVING

Outgoing Japanese Ambassador to the Philippines Kojiro Takano exchanges business cards with INQUIRER chair Marixi R. Prieto during a farewell lunch tendered in his honor at the Intercontinental Hotel in Makati City yesterday. Takano served in the country two years.

JOSEPH MUEGO/CONTRIBUTOR

Cardinal Sin suffers heart attack

By Blanche S. Rivera

RETIRED Manila Archbishop Jaime Cardinal Sin suffered a heart attack yesterday reportedly while undergoing dialysis at the Cardinal Santos Memorial Medical Center in San Juan.

Sin, a recognized champion of democracy in the Philippines, was still "under observation" as of 6:30 p.m., according to the archdiocese of Manila.

Afflicted with diabetes and kidney problems, he has been wheelchair-bound for the past three years and can no longer stand without assistance.

Arsobizpado information officer Peachy Yamsuan said Sin, 76, was probably still at the intensive care unit of the hospital.

This is the second time he suffered an attack. He was also confined for about a week at the Cardinal Santos hospital last year.

Sin retired from his post as Manila archbishop in September last year for health reasons and after three decades of service.

His physician brother, Dr. Ramon Sin, said the prelate was accompanied by his private secretary Fr. Jun Sescon at the hospital.

Archbishop Gaudencio Rosales was set to visit the cardinal last night, Yamsuan said. Sin's protégé, Bataan Bishop Soc Villegas, had been told of the attack.

Sin was instrumental in toppling the regime of former President Ferdinand Marcos in 1986 as millions of Catholics flocked to Edsa to heed his call to end the dictatorship.

He also supported the second bloodless revolution on Edsa that forced President Joseph Estrada out of Malacañang on charges of corruption three years ago.

Foreign investors 'shocked' by GMA admission of crisis

By Gil C. Cabacungan Jr.

MAJOR foreign investors have put their investments in the country on hold after they were "shocked" by President Macapagal-Arroyo's candid admission two months ago that the Philippines was in the midst of a fiscal crisis.

This was revealed yesterday by Standard Chartered Bank (SCB) officials who held an economic briefing in Malacañang where they warned that failure to enact at least two revenue measures before the end of the year could push the peso exchange rate closer to the 57 to one dollar level.

"Yes, it's true but it was an initial knee-jerk reaction," said Standard Chartered Bank senior vice president Michael Aguilar, when asked if major foreign funds were shying away from the country after its highest official admitted that the government was in dire financial straits.

Big foreign investors, specifically those that take long-term positions in their investments, are barred by their charters from investing in financially troubled countries, especially those that had declared themselves in fiscal crisis.

He said "it was a shock to everyone, especially to the international community" when the President owned up to the real state of the country.

"We had to explain to them [investors] the political situation, that we had a unique political system and how it works and [it took] a lot of time to describe to them how the executive branch works with Congress," Aguilar said.

"The knee-jerk reaction is behind us now. The investment community is now waiting whether [the Philippines] will make the unpopular moves of raising revenues, being more efficient and improving [its] finances," Aguilar said.

He said SBC has been telling its clients that while the President made an "unpopular statement," the admission was a "wake-up call to get us beyond the denial stage."

"The good thing about the announcement is executives have started interacting with lawmakers. We are a little bit optimistic," Aguilar said.

He said the President's admission was one of the reasons SBC has taken a more positive outlook on the Philippines compared to last year when it was the first investment firm to warn that the country was edging closer toward an Argentina-style crisis.

Another SBC official said that while the fiscal crisis had put some investments on hold, there were some investors coming in as evidenced by the resurgent stock market, which so far is the best performing bourse in the region.

These investors, however, are mainly short-term players who could quickly pull out their money as swiftly as they had put it in, he said.

The SBC official said there was a net foreign inflow in the stock market although he could not provide data to prove it.

Winston charged with graft for stock trading practices

GOVERNMENT Service and Insurance System (GSIS) president and general manager Winston Garcia was charged yesterday with graft in the Office of the Ombudsman for alleged "anomalous stock trading practices."

The militant Confederation for the Unity, Recognition and Advancement of Government Employees (Courage) accused Garcia of "arbitrarily" buying shares of Meralco, Equitable Bank and Ayala Corp. amounting to P936 million between November 2003 and June 2004 using the services of only one broker—First Resources Corp.

"Respondent's preference for this broker was arbitrary as it was done without the benefit of a credible selection process, thereby giving this private party unwarranted benefits, advantage and preference through manifest partiality, in violation of the Anti-Graft and Corrupt Practices Act," Courage president Ferdinand Gaite said in the four-page complaint.

According to Courage, corporate investors like GSIS were obligated to protect their investments by ensuring that "all aspects of risk potentials were properly covered."

This would mean accrediting 20 to 30 brokers who had to undergo a "rigid accreditation process," taking into account their research capabilities, financial size and settlement procedures.

Courage also accused Garcia of entering into "anomalous loans" by using his office to "secure special favors not otherwise enjoyed by ordinary GSIS members."

Courage cited Garcia's P11-million housing loan and his P2 million salary loan which was processed "in a matter of hours."

The loans were secured "in a manner contrary to law or regulation, unreasonable, unfair, discriminatory, irregular, immoral or devoid of justification," Courage said.

Garcia's camp, however, said he welcomed the investigation by the Ombudsman, saying it would give him an opportunity to clear his name.

"You will notice that the complaints are a rehash of what had been raised and responded to in the past. They (GSIS employees who staged protest actions last week against Garcia) failed to gather enough support to get him out of office. Now they are filing these complaints without any basis," said GSIS executive vice president for operations Enriqueta Disuanco.

On the alleged anomalous investment of the GSIS in stocks, GSIS executive vice president Omelita Tiangco said there was nothing irregular there.

She said that contrary to reports the GSIS could have earned more if it had placed its money in savings accounts instead of stocks, the pension fund actually earned much more in the stock market.

Tiangco said the GSIS invested P38 billion in stocks and the pension fund has so far earned P1.1 billion, an amount she said that could not be earned in an ordinary bank account.

The official also denied that the GSIS chief had favored First Resources, saying the broker had been servicing the GSIS since 1988, or way before the entry of Garcia. She added the pension fund is being serviced by 44 other stock brokers not just First Resources.

On Garcia's getting multimillion-peso loans quickly, his spokesperson and legal counsel Estrella Elamparo said there was nothing illegal about it because any GSIS member could get their loans fast after the pension fund implemented its computerization program.

Meanwhile, the Philippine Public School Teachers Association, which counts half a million members, scored the GSIS for transferring its accounts from LandBank to Union Bank of the Philippines.

In a resolution, the PPSTA denounced the GSIS move, saying it has made it difficult for teachers to cash their GSIS checks since Unionbank does not have branches in many parts of the country. *Armand N. Nocum and Michelle V. Remo*

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Asistio: Erap didn't force Chavit to do anything

By Armand N. Nocum

WAS IT a case of the pot calling the kettle black?

Testifying at the Sandiganbayan yesterday in the plunder trial of ex-President Joseph Estrada, Rep. Luis Asistio (NPC, 2nd dist., Caloocan City) branded erstwhile close friend Ilocos Sur Gov. Luis "Chavit" Singson a liar for saying in his own testimony that Estrada had forced him to collect 'jueteng' payola and tobacco excise taxes for the ousted chief executive.

"I believe it was just a figment of his [Singson's] imagination," said Asistio, 67, Estrada's friend of 45 years, adding that Estrada never told him about the supposed P5 to P10 million in jueteng payola and the P170 million in Ilocos Sur tobacco excise taxes that Singson allegedly delivered to Estrada.

Asistio said that after Singson and Estrada had their falling out and before Singson took his story to the press, the latter was talking to him almost daily and pouring out "his grievances" over how Estrada was giving juicy posts and the Bingo Two-Ball franchise to his political enemies.

"That was his main grievance—political leadership—not jueteng," Asistio said of Singson, his own friend of 40 years. Asistio was responding to a question from Estrada lawyer Raymond Fortun, who presented him as the sixth witness of the defense.

After the hearing, Asistio said Singson's story about the jueteng payola and the tobacco excise taxes could have been an "afterthought" played out for the impeachment trial of Estrada and later for the Sandiganbayan hearings, where Singson was the "star witness" of the prosecution.

But Asistio's testimony immediately drew a strong reaction from Singson, who called his erstwhile friend a liar.

"*Sinungaling si* Congressman Asistio *sa bagay na yan. Sinungaling siya. Sabagay,* ex-convict *naman siya* (He's a liar. Anyway, he's an ex-convict)," Singson said, alluding to Asistio's 17 years in prison for kidnapping years ago.

"Why is he allowing himself to be used by Estrada? Maybe they have a big deal," Singson said in a telephone interview.

For about a month now, the defense panel has been presenting witnesses to show that Singson had fund irregularities amounting to about P800 million in Ilocos Sur and that he did not need to be prodded by Estrada to commit graft.

Estrada's lawyers also claimed that Singson blew the whistle on Estrada to save himself from certain criminal and administrative actions owing to his failure to liquidate cash advances as governor of Ilocos Sur.

In yesterday's hearing, Asistio claimed to have set up a meeting between Singson and Estrada during the latter's official trip to the United States in July 2000 where Singson reportedly asked Estrada to get the Commission of Audit off his back.

BEAUTIES ANY WAY YOU LOOK AT IT
Miss Philippines Margaret Ann Bayot (center), Miss Japan Tamiko Kawahara (left) and Miss Russia Natalia Kolodeznikova horse around during a visit to the Great Wall of China ahead of the Miss International pageant which will be held in Beijing on Oct. 16. AFP

Woman bombing suspect nabbed

A WOMAN suspected of involvement in the deadly Davao bombings last year which killed 38 people and wounded 100 others is now in government custody.

Military antiterrorism sources identified her as Monawara Yusop. She was arrested on Wednesday in Paco, Manila, along with a male suspect identified only as Mentang.

Two unlicensed .45-cal. pistols were seized from the two, officials said.

Authorities said the two were believed to be members of a radical faction of the Moro Islamic Liberation Front (MILF) and had trained with the Jemaah Islamiyah (JI) in the Mt. Kararao range in Lanao del Sur and in Indonesia.

A source told the INQUIRER that operatives also recovered thick documents, mostly correspondence about the Davao bombings and plans for other bombing operations, from the suspects.

The documents also revealed Mentang's alleged links to senior JI officers like Zulkifli, Mustaqi and Taufik Rifke, who was arrested last year. The documents also revealed other likely targets of JI bombings in different urban centers in the Philippines.

The MILF and the government are due to return to the negotiating table soon in an attempt to forge a peace pact.

Presently, members of an international monitoring team are in the country to make sure a ceasefire between the government and the rebel group is strictly observed.

Recently, the government dropped charges against some 180 leaders and members of the MILF arising from their alleged involvement in the Davao bombings. The dropping of the charges was part of confidence-building measures on the part of the government to ensure the resumption of the peace talks. *Alcuin Papa*

Jaloslos won't return to prison

FORMER Zamboanga Rep. Romeo Jalosjos refuses to return to the New Bilibid Prisons (NBP) for fear of his life, Bureau of Corrections Director General Vicente Vinarao said yesterday.

Vinarao showed reporters a letter from Jalosjos dated Oct. 6 asking that his return to the NBP in Muntinlupa City be deferred because he had received death threats and there was a plot by unidentified persons to ambush him on his way back to the prison.

In his letter, Jalosjos said the plan to kill him was revealed to him by prison officials Celso Bravo, chief of the NBP investigating unit, and SO3 Mario Estipono.

Vinarao wondered why Bravo and Estipono gave the information to Jalosjos instead of informing prison officials.

He said NBP officials will tackle the security problem and ensure the safety of Jalosjos.

He said he would also send a doctor to the Makati Medical Center, where Jalosjos has been confined since Oct. 2 after reportedly suffering heart problems, to check on his condition.

"If his condition warrants it, then he should be returned immediately [to the NBP]," Vinarao said.

Jalosjos was convicted by a Makati court on Dec. 12, 1997, of two counts of rape and six counts of committing acts of lasciviousness on a minor. He was sentenced to two life terms plus 72 years at the NBP for the crime. *Nancy C. Carvajal*

Malaysia protests sultan's claim

KUALA LUMPUR—Malaysia has lodged a protest with Manila after a Muslim leader who was installed as the sultan of Sulu voiced hopes of reviving a territorial claim over timber-rich Sabah state on Borneo island, Malaysia's foreign minister said Sunday.

Officials at the Malaysian Foreign Ministry sent a protest note to their Philippine counterparts earlier this week after Rodinood Julaspi Kiram II reportedly said Malaysia was illegally occupying Sabah, Foreign Minister Syed Hamid Albar said.

"We know the Philippine government understands our position on Sabah's sovereignty," Syed Hamid was quoted as saying by the national news agency, Bernama. "But even though our relations are good, the issue of our country's sovereignty cannot be taken lightly."

The sultanate of Sulu obtained Sabah from the sultanate of Brunei in the 18th century. But the British later leased Sabah and transferred control of the state to Malaysia, which was federated in 1963 to comprise peninsular Malaysia and part of Borneo island.

Kiram, who was crowned Sulu's sultan earlier this month, has reportedly said he wants to take Sulu's claim over Sabah to the World Court in the Hague, but has given no other details.

Sabah and the southern Philippines are separated by a short boat ride. People in the two areas have close cultural ties and illegal immigrants often cross the sea border. *AP*

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Lawyer in Ecleo killing shot dead

From page A1

of Ecleo, who is accused of killing his wife Alona Bacolod-Ecleo.

"We are looking into all these angles but we can't pinpoint yet as to what specific case [we have] until we arrest the suspects," said Supt. Salvador Manga, Criminal Investigation and Detection Group chief in Central Visayas (CIDG-7).

But Cebu City Mayor Tomas Osmeña, Crusade Against Violence (CAV) national vice chair Thelma Chiong and Niño Bacolod, younger brother of Alona, aired their suspicion that Ecleo could have been behind the killing.

Offer of reward

Osmeña offered P100,000 for any information that would lead to the arrest of the gunman and his companion.

Ecleo's lawyer, Orlando Salatandre, strongly denied his client had anything to do with the killing, saying Ecleo's side loved Yongco even if she belonged to the prosecution.

Ecleo is in Manila where he is undergoing treatment for a heart ailment.

Witnesses said two men arrived on a motorcycle at about 8:45 a.m. and parked it near a lamppost about 10 meters from Yongco's office located on the ground floor of her two-story house at the corner of Alcohol and Zapatera Streets in Zapatera.

One man got off the motorcycle and went to the lawyer's office. He shot her four times and casually walked back to the motorcycle, where his companion was waiting.

The two fled.

Daily ritual

Lawyer Felimon Yongco, the victim's husband, said he was attending to the family store beside their house when he heard bursts of gunfire.

When he went to check, he saw his wife, still in her housedress, slumped on the sofa in a pool of blood.

CEBU City homicide chief Manuel Monilar shows a sketch of one of the suspects in the killing of lawyer Arbet Sta. Ana Yongco.

CDN PHOTO/JUNJIE MENDOZA

Felimon immediately ran to the house of Barangay Captain Francisco Benedicto across the street.

"She was holding a framed Bible verses when we found her," Benedicto said in Cebuano. He said that part of her daily ritual was to sit on the sofa and meditate on the word of God.

Benedicto said the gunman easily got inside the office because the door was not locked. His wife also had a habit of receiving clients before 8 a.m.

Police recovered four empty shells of a .45-cal. pistol from Yongco's office.

Benedicto told the INQUIRER that the suspects might have been monitoring her movements because the timing of the killing was "perfect."

"In this usual busy street, the suspects committed the crime when no one was passing by. They must have been studying her [movements] for a while," he said.

Sketch of gunman

SPO4 Mario Monilar, Cebu City Police Office chief of the homicide division, said he already had an artist's sketch of the gunman based on the description given by a minor, who happened to be passing by during the shooting.

The gunman was described as about 40 years old, with brown complexion and sporting long hair and a gray beard. He was at least 5 feet and 5 inches tall.

Manga told the INQUIRER that the CIDG-7 was conducting a parallel investigation and was looking into revenge as a possible motive.

He said Yongco had been involved in prosecuting sensational cases involving abuses against women and children.

Recently, he said, Yongco won a case against a father who raped his twin daughters and who was meted out 26 counts of death.

Yongco was also involved in the rescue of a young woman from Palawan who had been allegedly used as a sex slave by her boyfriend.

Manga admitted police were not also discounting the possibility that the killing was connected to the parricide case against Ecleo filed by his in-laws.

Not Ecleo

But Salatandre maintained his client was not involved, saying he and Ecleo were shocked when they heard the news of Yongco's killing.

Last April 21, the court allowed Ecleo to post bail of P1 million after his doctors testified that his heart condition might worsen if he remained at the Bagong Buhay Rehabilitation Center, where he had been detained since June 2002.

Salatandre said his client had no motive to kill the lawyer because the parricide case was almost over.

"We also love Attorney Yongco. We condole with the family of Attorney Yongco and we will be missing her in the legal family," Salatandre said.

The Integrated Bar of the Philippines-Cebu City and Legal Alternatives for Women Inc. (Law Inc.) condemned the killing.

SUPERFERRY 14 bombing suspects Habil Dellosa and Alhamser Manatad, alias Kosovo, are presented to the media by President Macapagal-Arroyo and Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza at NCRPO headquarters in Bicutan, Taguig, on Monday. VAL HANDUMON

SuperFerry 14 . . .

From page A1

dro Mendoza said the investigation dragged on because it took five months to raise the ferry, which ended up lying on its side in shallow water. Only then were investigators able to take a close look at the tangle of twisted metal and conclude that a bomb had caused the disaster.

The PNP Criminal and Investigation and Detection Group said it had also secured the testimony of a witness to support the complaint it filed in the Department of Justice against the six suspects, four of whom are at large.

Charged with multiple counts of murder, frustrated murder and attempted murder were Janjalani, the head of the Abu Sayyaf; Soliman, the group's spokesperson; Alhamser Manatad Limbong, alias Kosovo; Redendo Cain Delloso, alias Habil Akmad Dellosa; Gamal Baharan, alias Tapay, and a Kashmir Doe.

Delloso and Limbong, a cousin of Janjalani, were arrested in March in connection with an alleged terrorist plot to bomb malls, trains, an oil depot, foreign embassies and other targets in Metro Manila. Police said 36 kilos of TNT were seized from the two suspects.

Explosives training

Police said Dellosa had undergone explosives training from the regional terrorist group Jemaah Islamiyah in Lanao del Sur.

American missionary Gracia Burnham, one of the hostages seized by the Abu Sayyaf from Palawan's Dos Palmas Resort in 2001, identified Limbong as one of her captors. Burnham also tagged Limbong in the beheading of Guillermo Sobero of Corona, California. Martin Burnham, Gracia's husband, was later killed in a rescue operation to free the missionary couple.

Limbong, who carries a P150,000 price on his head, was also allegedly involved in the October 2002 Malagutay bombing that killed one US serviceman.

Soliman was the target of an unsuccessful US-backed operation on Jolo island two weeks ago that was aimed at capturing or killing him. He and Janjalani carry $5-million bounties on their heads.

The Abu Sayyaf, which is on Washington's list of international terror groups said it planted a bomb inside a television set that one of its members carried aboard the SuperFerry 14.

A blast and fire struck the ferry, which was carrying about 900 people, an hour after it left Manila's North Harbor for Central Visayas and Northern Mindanao. The official report said the bodies of 63 people were recovered and that 53 others are missing and believed dead.

The presumed death toll of 116 would make the ferry's sinking Southeast Asia's second-worst terror attack after the 2002 Bali bombings that killed 202 people on the Indonesian resort island.

Extortion letter

Mendoza said investigators believed the SuperFerry 14 was targeted because its owner—Aboitiz Transport Systems Corp. (formerly WG&A)—had not complied with an Abu Sayyaf letter last year demanding $1 million in protection money.

A preliminary investigation of the fire had indicated two possible causes—a bomb or a gas explosion.

The ship's captain testified that he smelled gunpowder as smoke engulfed the vessel after the blast. Other witnesses said it originated from a part of the ship where the Abu Sayyaf claimed to have planted a bomb.

Security officials had said that Dellosa confessed after his arrest that he stashed about 3.6-kg of TNT in a TV set that he carried onto the ferry. Dellosa later claimed he was tortured into signing a confession.

Police said in their complaint that Muslim convert Walter Villanueva told them that Dellosa stayed at his Quezon City house, where he packed and attached wires to the TV set. Dellosa allegedly said the TV contained TNT and that he was ordered by Janjalani and Soliman to place the bomb aboard the ferry.

Dellosa allegedly later told Villanueva by phone that the bomb had exploded aboard the ferry and that more terror attacks were in the offing in the capital, police said.

PNP spokesperson Supt. Leopoldo Bataoil said that authorities had implemented security measures "to prevent similar" attacks.

In a press statement, Bataoil said sea marshals and bomb-sniffing dogs now accompanied ferries. The government has also imposed tougher screening of passengers and cargo, while port workers are being trained on security. *With reports from Alcuin Papa, Clarissa S. Batino, Christian V. Esguerra, AP and AFP*

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2 error-filled science textbooks . . .

schools, the INQUIRER found out yesterday.

The Department of Education (DepEd) had said it disapproved "Science and Technology for the Modern World" I and II by Diwa Scholastic Press in 2001 for containing errors.

The DepEd had procured the textbooks the previous year, and did not renew the contract with the Diwa-led consortium in 2001.

The INQUIRER checked and found that some public high schools in Metro Manila were still using the textbooks and teachers were not given "teaching notes" to inform them about the corrections.

"The errors are still there and yet the books are still in use," said Marian School executive Antonio Calipjo Go, who first called attention to the textbooks' errors in a letter to the INQUIRER on Feb. 18, 2002.

Go invited the media yesterday to check whether the textbooks were still being used. It turned out they were being used in Sauyo High School in Novaliches, Quezon City.

Misleading the public

He castigated the DepEd for misleading the public and for continuing to use a defective textbook.

Among the glaring errors in the freshman science textbook are:

- Describing the earth on p. 178 as shaped like a coconut. "It bulges halfway between the equator and the north pole (and) flattens between the equater and the south pole. The north pole bulges by about 16 metres and the south pole flattens by about 16 metres."
- Use on p. 224 of a silly nursery rhyme to demonstrate the food chain.

In the sophomore science textbook the errors are:

- A description on p. 15: "When you wake up every morning the nerves and muscles of your eyes and body seem to wake up with you."
- On p. 71 saying "fishes... also have lungs for breathing."
- A wrong illustration of the male anatomy on p. 184.
- Graphic sexual descriptions while discussing the reproductive system on p. 191 and the use of contraceptives on p. 193.

Go earlier came under fire from DepEd for claiming that its history textbook for second year high school students, SD Publications' "Asya: Noon, Ngayon at sa Hinaharap" had 431 errors.

Abad's promise

Education Secretary Florencio Abad admitted at least "one major error" but so far nothing came out of his promise to review the textbook.

Go yesterday disclosed that he also found more than 300 errors in another DepEd-approved history textbook, "Kasaysayan ng Daigdig" also by SD Publications, for third year high school students.

Among the errors are:

- That the Aztec, Mayan and Incan civilizations were all in South America, when the Aztecs were in what is now called Mexico, the Mayans were in Guatemala and the Incas were in Peru and parts of neighboring countries. Mexico and Guatemala are in Central America.
- Wrong chronology of the Chinese dynasties, skipping about 700 years of history;
- That there were only 15 Roman emperors, that the first one was Marcus Aurelius when the first was Augustus;
- Erroneous dates and the use of CE instead of A.D.

On Feb. 28, 2002 in reply to Go's letter, Undersecretary Fe Hidalgo said the DepEd disapproved "Science and Technology for the Modern World II" the previous year.

"The publisher was also informed of the errors found," said Hidalgo in a letter to the INQUIRER. But the two textbooks are still on the DepEd Instructional Materials Council Secretariat's list of approved textbooks.

Hidalgo, who was in Baguio City yesterday, did not return the INQUIRER's call.

Diwa Scholastic Press, for its part, washed its hands of the affair.

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"We don't know if the books are still in circulation. It's all up to the DepEd," said Diwa corporate communications director Bill Fernando.

Diwas's response

Fernando said that as far as Diwa was concerned, it had fulfilled its contract with DepEd in 2000 to supply a certain number of the textbooks.

"Diwa's role is to deliver the books. After that we don't know what DepEd has done," he said.

He said "other than being told by the DepEd of the errors," the education department did not involve Diwa in the review and revision.

He acknowledged that Go "had valid points (in claiming errors) but we also have to see if the errors were glaring or detrimental or a matter of interpretation."

Fernando said Diwa did not reprint the textbooks because DepEd did not renew the contract.

But Go showed the media copies of the textbooks. The one for second year high school students bore a copyright of 2003. The first year high school version had a copyright of 1999.

Undersecretary for finance Juan Miguel Luz earlier said that DepEd did not sue the winning consortium for the textbooks with errors because the contract had already been fulfilled.

Superman' star Christopher Reeve dies at 52

From page A1

allow him to breathe for longer periods without a respirator, Reeve emerged to lobby Congress for better insurance protection against catastrophic injury and to move an Academy Award audience to tears with a call for more films about social issues.

"Hollywood needs to do more," he said in the March 1996 Oscar awards appearance. "Let's continue to take risks. Let's tackle the issues. In many ways our film community can do it better than anyone else. There is no challenge, artistic or otherwise, that we can't meet."

Reeve returned to directing, and even returned to acting in a 1998 production of "Rear Window," a modern update of the Hitchcock thriller about a man in a wheelchair who becomes convinced a neighbor has been murdered. Reeve won a Screen Actors Guild award for best actor.

"I was worried that only acting with my voice and my face, I might not be able to communicate effectively enough to tell the story," Reeve said.

"But I was surprised to find that if I really concentrated, and just let the thoughts happen, that they would read on my face. With so many close-ups, I knew that my every thought would count."

Vow to walk again

In 2000, Reeve was able to move his index finger, and a specialized workout regimen made his legs and arms stronger. He also regained sensation in other parts of his body. He vowed to walk again.

"I refuse to allow a disability to determine how I live my life. I don't mean to be reckless, but setting a goal that seems a bit daunting actually is very helpful toward recovery," Reeve said.

Reeve's support of stem cell research made it a major campaign issue between US President George W. Bush and his Democratic challenger John Kerry. Reeve's name was even mentioned by Kerry earlier this month during the second presidential debate.

His athletic, 1.93-meter frame and love of adventure made him a natural, if largely unknown, choice for the title role in the first "Superman" movie in 1978. He insisted on performing his own stunts.

REEVE in the 1994 movie "Speechless." REUTERS

Although he reprised the role three times, Reeve often worried about being typecast as an action hero.

"Look, I've flown, I've become evil, loved, stopped and turned the world backward, I've faced my peers, I've befriended children and small animals and I've rescued cats from trees," Reeve told The Los Angeles Times in 1983. "What else is there left for Superman to do that hasn't been done?"

Though he owed his fame to it, Reeve made a concerted effort to, as he often put it, "escape the cape." He played an embittered, crippled Vietnam veteran in the 1980 Broadway play "Fifth of July," a love-struck, time-traveler in the 1980 movie "Somewhere in Time," and an aspiring playwright in the 1982 suspense thriller "Deathtrap."

More recent films included John Carpenter's "Village of the Damned," and the HBO movies "Above Suspicion" and "In the Gloaming," which he directed. Among his other film credits are "The Remains of the Day," "The Aviator," and "Morning Glory."

Reeve was born Sept. 25, 1952, in New York City, son of a novelist and a newspaper reporter. About the age of 10, he made his first stage appearance—in Gilbert and Sullivan's "The Yeoman of the Guard" at McCarter Theater in Princeton, N.J.

Stage debut

After graduating from Cornell University in 1974, he landed a part as coldhearted bigamist Ben Harper on the television soap opera "Love of Life." He also performed frequently on stage, winning his first Broadway role as the grandson of a character played by Katharine Hepburn in "A Matter of Gravity."

Reeve's first movie role was a minor one in the submarine disaster movie "Gray Lady Down," released in 1978. "Superman" soon followed. Reeve was selected for the title role from among about 200 aspirants.

Active in many sports, Reeve owned several horses and competed in equestrian events regularly. Witnesses to the 1995 accident said Reeve's horse had cleared two of 15 fences during the jumping event and stopped abruptly at the third, flinging the actor headlong to the ground. Doctors said he fractured the top two vertebrae in his neck and damaged his spinal cord.

While filming "Superman" in London, Reeve met modeling agency co-founder Gae Exton, and the two began a relationship that lasted several years. The couple had two sons, although they were never wed.

Reeve later married Dana Morosini; they had one son, Will, 11. Reeve is also survived by his mother, Barbara Johnson; his father, Franklin Reeve; his brother, Benjamin Reeve; and his two children from his relationship with Exton, Matthew, 25, and Alexandra, 21.

No plans for a funeral were immediately announced.

A few months after the accident, Reeve told interviewer Barbara Walters that he considered suicide in the first dark days after he was injured. But he quickly overcame such thoughts when he saw his children.

"I could see how much they needed me and wanted me . . . and how lucky we all are and that my brain is on straight," he said. *AP*

The WORLD

Editor Luverne B. Gueco

Disputes force delay in Afghan vote count

AFGHAN election staff count ballots at a UN office at Herat airport, Oct. 11. AP

KABUL—Afghan officials delayed counting ballots in a historic presidential election on Monday to deal with complaints of fraud, but several of the candidates appeared to be pulling back from an initial decision to boycott the vote.

Saturday's election, the first time Afghans have voted for a president, ended in confusion after 15 of the 18 candidates announced the boycott in the middle of the day saying a system to prevent illegal multiple voting had failed.

However many of them were reported to be willing to drop the boycott call and let the Joint Election Management Body (JEMB) decide on their complaints.

The JEMB, made up of UN and Afghan officials, said it could not start the count until it decided what to do with the ballots that are in doubt.

"We have asked that reconciliation of votes carry on but to hold off on mixing, sorting and counting of votes until we receive advice from the expert panel on measures to be taken regarding specific boxes," JEMB vice chair J. Ray Kennedy said.

"We are hoping all this will be in place by the end of the day tomorrow (Tuesday)," he said.

Ballot boxes were being opened at eight counting centers across the rugged country and the votes were being reconciled—a process in which the seals on the boxes are checked and the number of papers in each box tallied with the totals maintained by poll officials.

Although no firm program was announced, many officials had said the count would start on Monday.

Millions in the impoverished Islamic nation participated enthusiastically in the election, ignoring threats of violence against voters by militant Taliban insurgents.

President Hamid Karzai, the favorite to win the poll, said on Sunday some of the candidates who had called for a boycott had changed their minds and were willing to accept its legitimacy.

"Some of the esteemed candidates have rejected the boycotting of the election," Karzai told a news conference.

"And we are hopeful that other candidates do not ignore the national jubilation and let the votes be counted.

"The Afghan people voted yesterday in millions and that is what I see," he added. "I am blinded to everything else. It was a celebration, I'm thrilled."

The problem was the indelible ink put on the finger of everyone who voted to stop them voting again. Some election workers used the wrong pen to mark voters, and the ordinary marker ink was quickly washed off. *Reuters*

Cambodia may elect new king

PHNOM PENH—Cambodia moved closer toward selecting a new monarch to replace abdicated King Norodom Sihanouk Monday, with the country's Senate approving a bill needed to appoint his successor.

The ailing Sihanouk, 81, abruptly stepped down last Thursday, stunning his 13 million subjects and forcing lawmakers to rush through a long-delayed bill Friday guiding a nine-member throne council on choosing a new king.

Both the highly revered Sihanouk and Prime Minister Hun Sen, who effectively controls the council, have backed 51-year-old Prince Norodom Sihamoni, a former Prague-trained classical dancer, to become the new head of state.

"The debate and approval of the throne council law is finished," acting Senate president Prince Sisovath Chivan Monirak told senators attending the session.

Of the 51 attending the 90-minute debate, 49 voted in favor of the bill which must now be approved by the Constitutional Council and signed by the acting head of state Chea Sim.

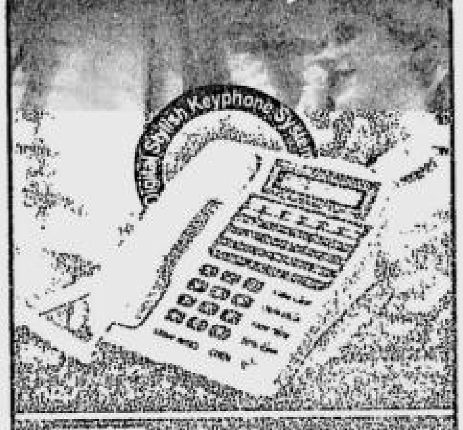
Council members had already begun scrutinizing the new law and were due to announce within a few hours whether they have approved it. If they do, Chea Sim is expected to sign the bill Tuesday.

The throne council will then meet Thursday to vote on their favored choice—so long as the notoriously mercurial Sihanouk is resolute in his decision to quit—in order to meet a tight seven-day deadline.

One of Sihanouk's other sons, Prince Norodom Ranariddh, who is also national assembly president and another contender for the throne, is currently with his father in Beijing attempting to persuade him to retake the symbolic post.

But the monarch issued two statements at the weekend—without their usual royal insignia—insisting he would not rescind his decision to step down, insisting he was too old and unwell.

And his royalist party officials said that 60-year-old Ranariddh may return as early as Monday night, a move that would signal he has accepted his father's decision. *AFP*



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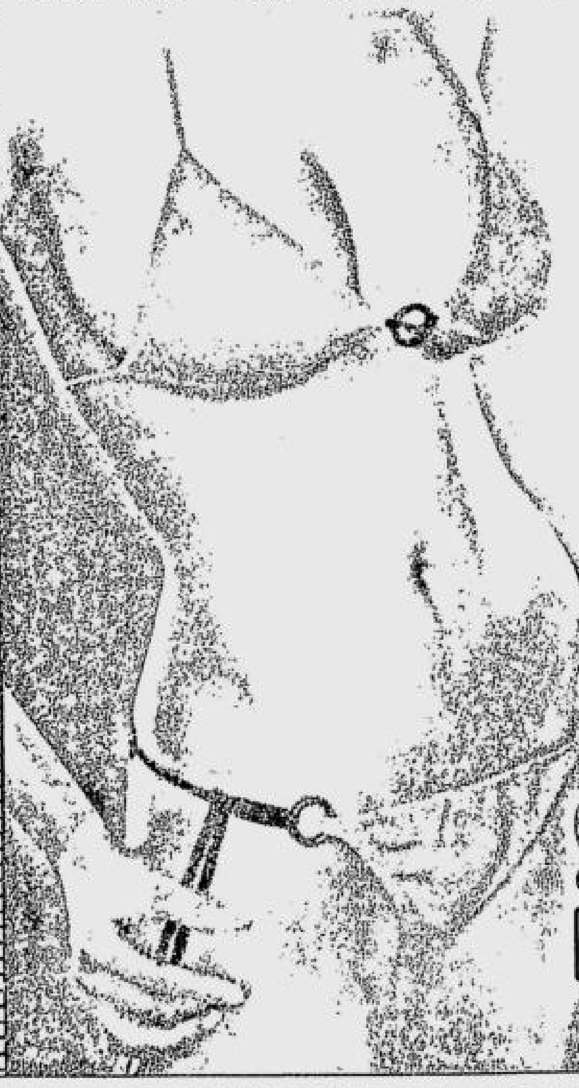

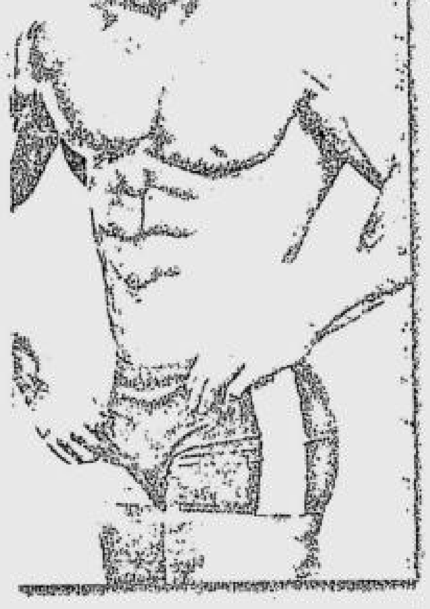

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[illegible]

Derrida, French father of deconstructionism, 74

DERRIDA in Dec. 2, 1981 photo

PARIS—French philosopher Jacques Derrida, the founder of the school of deconstructionism, has died of cancer at the age of 74, France Info radio said on Saturday.

It said Algerian-born Derrida had died on Friday of cancer of the pancreas.

Derrida, who divided his time between France and the United States, argued that the traditional way we read texts makes a number of false assumptions and that they have multiple meanings which even their author may not have understood.

His thinking gave rise to the school of deconstruction, a method of analysis that has been applied to literature, linguistics, philosophy, law and architecture.

It is heralded as showing the multiple layers of meaning at work in language, but was described by critics as nihilistic.

"In him, France gave the world one of the greatest contemporary philosophers, one of the major figures in the intellectual life of our time," French President Jacques Chirac said in a statement after learning of his death.

"Through his work, he sought to find the free movement which lies at the root of all thinking."

Born into a Jewish family in El-Biar in Algeria on July 15, 1930, Derrida began studying philosophy at the elite Ecole Normale Superieure in 1952 and taught at Paris's Sorbonne University from 1960 to 1964.

From the early 1970s, Derrida spent much of his time teaching in the United States, at such universities as Johns Hopkins, Yale and the University of California at Irvine.

His work focused on language. Challenging the idea that a text has an unchangeable meaning, Derrida said the author's intentions cannot be accepted unconditionally and that this means each text can have multiple meanings.

His ideas were seen as showing unavoidable tensions between the ideals of clarity and coherence that govern philosophy. *Reuters*

Sadr militia begins handing in arms under disarmament deal

BAGHDAD—Shiite militiamen handed in some weapons in the first few hours of a five-day disarmament plan that the interim government hopes will defuse the major Baghdad flashpoint of Sadr City, police said on Monday.

Iraqi police at one of three designated arms collection points in the sprawling slum district said they had received only a handful of weapons from Sadr's Mehdi Army militia so far.

Police at another collection point said no weapons had been turned over there.

Police at the Habibiya station allowed cameramen to film only one batch of arms they said had been brought earlier in a civilian car. The display included rocket-propelled grenades, rusty artillery shells, land mines and assault rifles.

A militia source said earlier that militiamen were awaiting orders from their leader Moqtada Sadr, who is based in the southern city of Najaf, to start turning over their weapons under a deal reached with Iraq's interim government on Saturday.

The agreement by the Mehdi Army to disarm in its Baghdad stronghold of Sadr City could restore calm in the impoverished area on the northeast edge of Baghdad which has seen fierce clashes with US forces in recent weeks.

"We have gathered our weapons. We are waiting for the final word to hand them over," the Sadr militia source said.

The youthful cleric's ragtag fighters were due to hand in heavy weapons at three collection points—the town council building and two police stations—under the deal.

The US-backed government aims to retake control of rebel-held areas throughout Iraq by political or military means ahead of national assembly elections due in January.

Militiamen in Sadr City will have five days to hand in their weapons, National Security Adviser Kassim Daoud said on Sunday, adding that the government would spend more than $500 million on reconstruction in the slums where two million Shiites live.

Daoud said Iraq's police and National Guard would play a role in Sadr City under the deal and reserved the right to seek support from US-led troops to maintain security.

The government said the Sadr City accord was a good chance for "all misled armed groups in Iraq to rejoin civil society."

Peace talks are also under way to try to resolve a standoff in the Sunni Muslim stronghold of Falluja, west of Baghdad, held by insurgents since a failed US assault in April. *Reuters*

'Homosexual' Anwar is finished, Mahathir says

SINGAPORE—Retired Malaysia Prime Minister Mahathir Mohamad launched a scathing attack on former deputy Anwar Ibrahim Monday, rubbishing his one-time protege's chances of a comeback "because he was homosexual."

Re-stating his assertion that married father-of-six Anwar was released from jail only because of an administrative blunder, Mahathir said rapists and murderers could also now dodge Malaysia's legal system on technicalities.

"So if you feel like murdering, come to Malaysia," Mahathir said.

MAHATHIR

Anwar, who was once Malaysia's deputy prime minister under Mahathir, was jailed on sodomy and corruption charges in 1998 for allegedly sodomizing his official driver, then abusing his power to cover up the act.

Anwar and human rights groups maintained the charges were trumped up to prevent him from challenging Mahathir, whose 22-year reign as Malaysian leader ended when he retired in October last year.

Wan Azizah Wan Ismail, Anwar's wife, has remained one of her husband's most loyal supporters throughout the ordeal. She set up the opposition National Justice Party while he was detained and remains a member of parliament.

Malaysia's Federal Court overturned Anwar's sodomy conviction last month, saying the charges could not be proved beyond reasonable doubt and criticizing the police and prosecution for their handling of the case.

While maintaining that Anwar had committed sodomy—a crime in mainly Muslim Malaysia—Mahathir said Monday his former ally's name was permanently blackened in the eyes of their countrypeople. *AFP*

Civet named SARS source

BEIJING—Chinese health experts have concluded that the civet cat, considered a delicacy in the south of the country, was the primary source of last year's SARS epidemic.

Thousands of civets were culled in southern Guangdong province in January this year on fears they may carry a form of the virus that can jump to humans.

The disease emerged in Guangdong in November 2002 and went on to kill 800 people, spread by travellers, around the world.

"Research proves that the civet cat is the primary animal source of the human SARS virus, with the ability to spread the virus," Xinhua's online service quoted the local government SARS Defense and Cure Scientific Group as saying in a statement on Sunday.

"So far, civet cat is the most easily infected wild animal... However, there isn't enough evidence to say the civet cat is the only source of human SARS virus."

Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome infected about 8,000 people around the world last year, about two-thirds of them in China, and savaged airline and tourism industries across Asia.

The civet is a small carnivorous mammal found in Asia and Africa. The brown, furry creature with a cat-like body, long tail and weasel-like face has long been coveted by those who believe its tender flesh will improve their health and complexion. *Reuters*

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SINNERS IN THE EYES OF AN ANGRY GOD

Angels cannot make babies while men can. The pangolin is an ant with scales. The Philippine islands resemble the head of a donkey; Indonesia resembles a giant serpent. Chinese are human beings, entirely understandable; they are expanding yearly. Unfortunately, God did not create the third sex. I once saw the corpse of a woman without pubic hair ---- she looked like a frog. Emaciated and desiccated, there is no doubt he has no come. The fag is an airhead. A fortress is a large and permanent fornication.

What you have just read are nuggets of wisdom worthy of being featured in Jay Leno's HEADLINES! These are just a few of the incredible idiocies taught to children in classrooms all over the Philippines. A few of them I have been able to correct through sheer persistence, but similar atrocities exist in very many of our textbooks, like flies on carrion. In another ten years, Filipinos brought up on silly notions like these will have devolved to become the simians we once were, before the word "sapiens" came to be attached to the word "Homo" in our scientific name. Errors in textbooks effectively institutionalize the idiotization of children.

One of the responses I got as a result of the publication of my paid ad of Sept. 20 was this question from a man who must have been taught in his younger days that everybody has a price: "How much money will it take to make you silent?" In a way, what he said about everybody having a price is true. This then is my price, and this is my answer.

To Mrs. Ester Vibal, owner of Vibal Publishing and SD Publications: I hold you directly responsible for feeding the lie which became the basis of Juan Miguel Luz' totally baseless and irresponsible statements in the Sept. 24 and 25 issues of the Inquirer: "Go was paid last year by Vibal Publishing to correct a series of its English textbooks. It appears that he tried to give them his 82-page notes (of errors) in exchange for something. It happened before."

How could this unthinking DepEd official know about this private transaction between Vibal and me if you had not maliciously leaked it to him? I did correct your series of six defective textbooks, for which I was paid for services rendered. IS ANYTHING WRONG WITH THAT? Why are you now insinuating that there is? Have I not invested those books (ACROSS BORDERS THROUGH READING) with the integrity they did not have before I corrected them? Is the Grade 4 book not better now than it was before, when it was still defining the word FORTRESS as "A LARGE AND PERMANENT FORNICATION"? Where is it written that I "tried to give you my 82-page notes in exchange for something," or that "it happened before"? In the absence of concrete evidence to support these allegations, you know you may not say these lies because I can institute legal proceedings against you. If I had money, I can even cause the filing of a class action against you for making books such as ASYA.

To the three authors of ASYA who said that I "manufactured and fabricated the errors" because I was "patently motivated by a malevolent desire to gain pecuniary interests," I say this. My charges against your book are based on evidence, the errors being written in black and white and evident for all save the intentionally blind to see. I am not the one "confusing the mind of the public because of unwarranted, erroneous and misleading interpretation." You are. Your published response to my open letter is a classic example of why it isn't wise to cover up a mistake with another mistake. You just added another boner to my vast collection of similar idiocies when you asserted that "God saved Jesus from crucifixion at the hands of the Jews." If a crime had not been committed, why is there a cadaver (ASYA)?

To Juan Miguel Luz: You are an irresponsible public official. On the very day of the publication of that first ad, you practically went all over town demolishing my reputation. Shouldn't you have checked to see if what I wrote is valid or not? Sec. Abad said that "it was premature to make a conclusion at that time," yet you concluded, on day one, that I had "malicious intent" and was "after money"? Remember that you are a public servant and you are there by the grace of the people. Ako ang naghain ng reklamo, ako ang pinalabas mong kriminal? You do not deserve to be in an agency which is supposed to see to the education of the children of this land. For how can you teach right when you do not know when you are wrong?

To Usec Fe Hidalgo: In an article ("Correct all our error-riddled textbooks") which was published in the Feb. 18, 2002 issue of the Inquirer, I cited Diwa Scholastic Press' SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR THE MODERN WORLD for First Year and Second Year High School for grave errors (Non-living things also increase in size and a pot may grow in size through accretion. Fishes breathe through their gills and they also have lungs for breathing. The shape of the earth is similar to a coconut. When you wake up every morning, the nerves and muscles of your eyes and body seem to wake up with you.). In your response ("Error-filled textbook disapproved") of Feb. 28, 2002, you said: "The books were disapproved last year during the evaluation of textbooks and hence was not procured by the DepEd. The publisher was also informed of the errors found." I wrote the Inquirer to dispute your claim but my letter never got published. Great was my shock when I saw the same titles in the DepEd's List of Approved Textbooks for this school year. I checked and I found out that, indeed, it is still being used in public secondary schools all over the country. In fact, these two titles are the only Science textbooks approved for use in all public high schools. But what really floored me was the discovery that the errors I specifically mentioned are all intact. They have never been corrected at all! There are no "teaching notes" either. Mandated by law to see to it that "the state protects and promotes the right of all citizens to quality education," you allowed these books to pass the evaluation and quality production standards of the DepEd not once but twice, the second time despite the fact that I had already declared them defective.

To former DepEd Secretary Edilberto de Jesus: In a letter to the editor (Inquirer, 10-1-04), you wrote: "On an earlier occasion, Go had criticized the DepEd for errors in a textbook he claimed were used in public schools. We informed him that the DepEd had neither purchased nor prescribed this book, which was in use in private schools. As far as I know, Go has never corrected a mistake he had committed in public." Where did this come from? You, Sir, are already out of the DepEd, yet you took time out to defend it. That is not bad ---- if it is to defend something which is right. I was never wrong in this case. You are. When I cited them for errors in 2002, Diwa Scholastic Press' SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY FOR THE MODERN WORLD (First Year and Second Year) were books included in the List of Approved Textbooks under DepEd Memo No. 35, series 2000. These two textbooks are the only two titles allowed by the DepEd to be used in all public secondary schools this school year. All the errors are still there; none had been corrected. There are no "teaching notes." The publisher even came out with a 2003 edition. So there. How can you so blatantly lie about this when all first year and second year high school students studying in the Philippines, as well as their teachers and parents, will tell you that I am telling the truth?

AND SO, I take my case to the people, and Heaven help me for what I'm about to say. If I will be made to pay for this, then I will obey the dictates of Him who is the true master of my fate. Still, pray for me, for my mother is old.

KASAYSAYAN NG DAIGDIG, written by Teofista Vivar, Ed.D., Nieva Discipulo, Priscilla Rillo and Zenaida de Leon, published by SD Publications and (unlike ASYA which was printed in Thailand) printed and distributed by companies based in Singapore, is the only third year high school textbook for Social Studies approved by the DepEd for use in all public secondary schools. After a thorough examination of the 1999 edition during the period Aug. 30 to Sept. 19, 2004, I discovered that it had five hundred three (503) errors. It was a disaster when I found out that there exists a 2000 edition and, to be really really fair, I again conducted a thorough examination of the 2000 edition during the period Sept. 23 to Oct. 7, 2004. It contains three hundred sixty-three (363) errors. I can, of course, justify my findings in any court of law and I assure you I will not lie. This sentence on page 137 contains eight grave errors : "May 16 na emperador na namuno sa imperyo (Romano) mula kay Marcus Aurelius (161- 180 CE) hanggang kay Romulus Augustus (476- 493 CE), huling emperador ng imperyo sa Silangan at sa bilang na ito, hindi hihigit sa lima ang maituturing na karapat-dapat." Four separate statements in this book teach the imbecilic notion that the Aztecs and the Mayas flourished in South America. SD Publications' KASAYSAYAN NG DAIGDIG is extremely, exceedingly defective.

I will end this letter by addressing the school children of this sad, grey land, those in the public schools especially, they who are truly the children of a lesser god. What little is given you is rendered even less by means both evil and foul. What should be yours by right and by law is denied you, or grudgingly surrendered to you in form and substance much shaved, diluted and adulterated. In short, defective. Inside of you, the tree of the knowledge of good and evil grows by the day. When you are older and stronger, get back at society by being good and doing good, for that is the purpose for which we were created. God wants us to be good, for Goodness is a religion unto itself. See to it that what wrong had been done to you when you were children you do not do to the next generation of children, for it is a wise farmer that keeps the best seeds for the next planting.

Should we be afraid to tell the truth? If we are, then there is little that separates us men from mice, which must cower in fear all their lives. With my God, my family, the memory of my father, and my conscience beside me, I am undaunted. Yet I am all alone doing this, and I need help. We must really be doing this together, as one nation under God, before our ship sinks, before even the mice abandon us to our sorry fates. We must stop the commercialization and prostitution of that noblest of all human undertakings, which is education. We must clean our books, and see to it that they teach only what is right, good and correct.

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Russian-born tycoon's party tops Lithuania poll, bids for key role

VILNIUS—A party led by a Russian-born millionaire bid for a key government role in the tiny Baltic state of Lithuania Monday after coming out on top in first-round parliamentary elections.

In the first elections to be held for the 141-member parliament, the Seimas, since Lithuania joined the European Union and Nato earlier this year, Viktor Uspaskich's fledgling opposition Labour Party captured 29 percent of the votes—gaining 23 seats.

USPASKICH

In Sunday's vote the ruling left-wing coalition of the Social Democrat and Social Liberal parties, led by outgoing Prime Minister Algirdas Brazauskas and parliamentary speaker Arturas Paulauskas, got 21 percent of the votes, and 19 seats in parliament.

Uspaskich, 45, who has built up a business empire worth $160 million since moving to Lithuania in the late 1980s, immediately laid claim to a top seat at the government table.

"I would not be a worse prime minister compared to all the previous governments," he said in an interview published Monday in the Respublika daily.

"We will be able to stop corruption which is out of control," he added.

The Labor Party, set up by Uspaskich only last year, had campaigned on a populist platform promising to fight corruption and boost jobs and living standards for the 3.5 million Lithuanians.

Despite the fastest growth rate in the European Union in a country dubbed the "Baltic Tiger," new-found prosperity has not trickled down to ordinary people outside the major cities who face stubbornly high unemployment.

"The voters have challenged traditional parties," the daily Lietuvos Ritas splashed across its front page.

But Uspaskich's Russian origin has raised concerns among many in Lithuania, which only gained its independence from Moscow 13 years ago after half a century of Soviet rule and is dependent on Russian gas supplies.

The elections' final results will be known only in two weeks' time when a second round of voting will be held in 66 local constituencies where no candidate won more than 50 percent of the vote.

The split vote means that a coalition will have to be formed and observers in Vilnius believe the current ruling parties will be likely to do a deal with Labor although only if it accepts a junior role.

"The Social Democrat and Social Liberals will be central in forming the future coalition," said Lauras Bielinis of the Institute for Political Science and International Relations.

The only other solution would be a minority leftist government excluding Labor with the tacit support of conservative and liberal parties, he said.

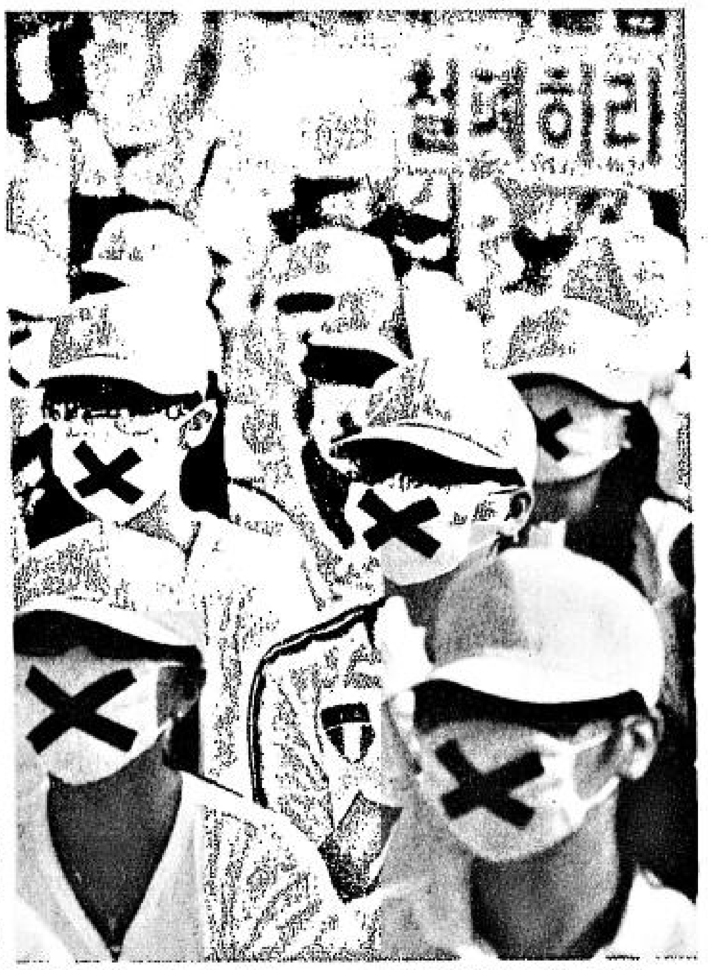
Speaking Sunday night as the results trickled in, the prime minister said the current ruling coalition was open to negotiations with Uspaskich.

"We will form a coalition with those who share our ideals and our program," Brazauskas said.

Western countries are betting that Uspaskich will not try to change Lithuania's pro-Western foreign policy.

"Those of us who have been working with Lithuania for a long time look forward to working with the new democratically elected government. Lithuanian people pick their leaders and we will work with them," a Western diplomat in Vilnius said.

The vote followed the election in July as president of US emigre Valdas Adamkus, after the impeachment of his predecessor Rolandas Paksas over ties to a shadowy Russian-born businessman. *AFP*



WEARING masks, South Korean sex workers take part in a rally demanding state recognition of their occupation in Pyongtaek, south of Seoul Oct. 11. REUTERS

S. Korea sex workers rally

PYEONGTAEK, South Korea—Hundreds of sex workers rallied in a red-light district in South Korea Monday to protest against antiprostitution laws they say threaten their livelihoods.

"Since when did the government start monitoring the lower part of the body?" chanted the estimated 500 prostitutes, who wore baseball caps and masks to cover their identities.

One sex worker told the crowd in a red-light district in Pyeongtaek, about 70 km south of the capital Seoul, that prostitutes were not capable of doing "other things than what we do for a living."

The government began enforcing the new laws last month to target human traffickers, pimps and prostitutes.

The legislation more than doubled the penalties for brothel owners who confine women and force prostitution, calling for property confiscation, up to $87,000 in fines or up to 10 years in jail.

Officials say the laws, supported by women's rights groups, will curb human rights abuses among sex industry workers and help them find other jobs.

But the tough measures angered sex workers, who feared the crackdown will drive them out of business.

Thousands of sex workers held a similar protest last week in front of the National Assembly. *AP*

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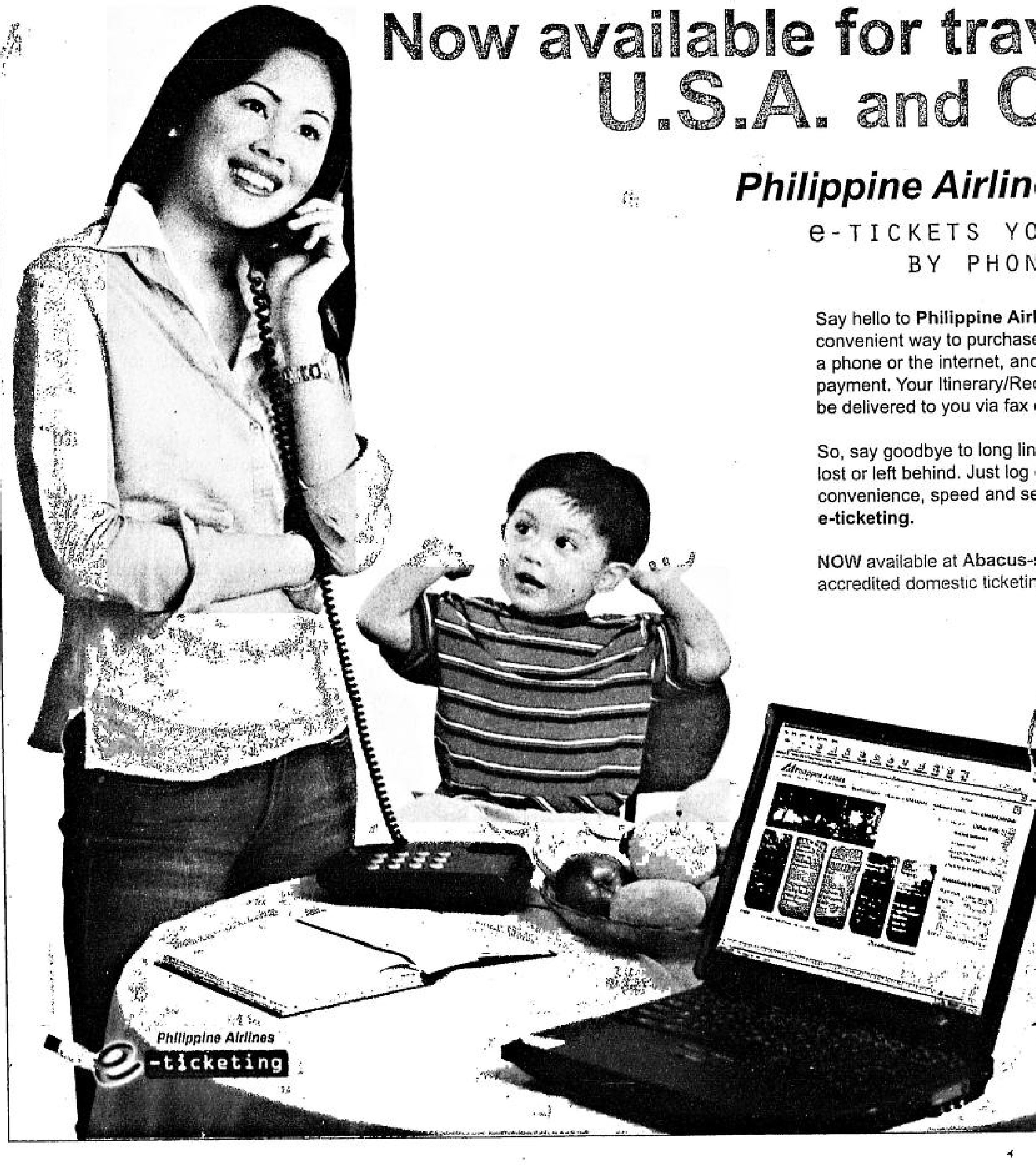
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OPINION

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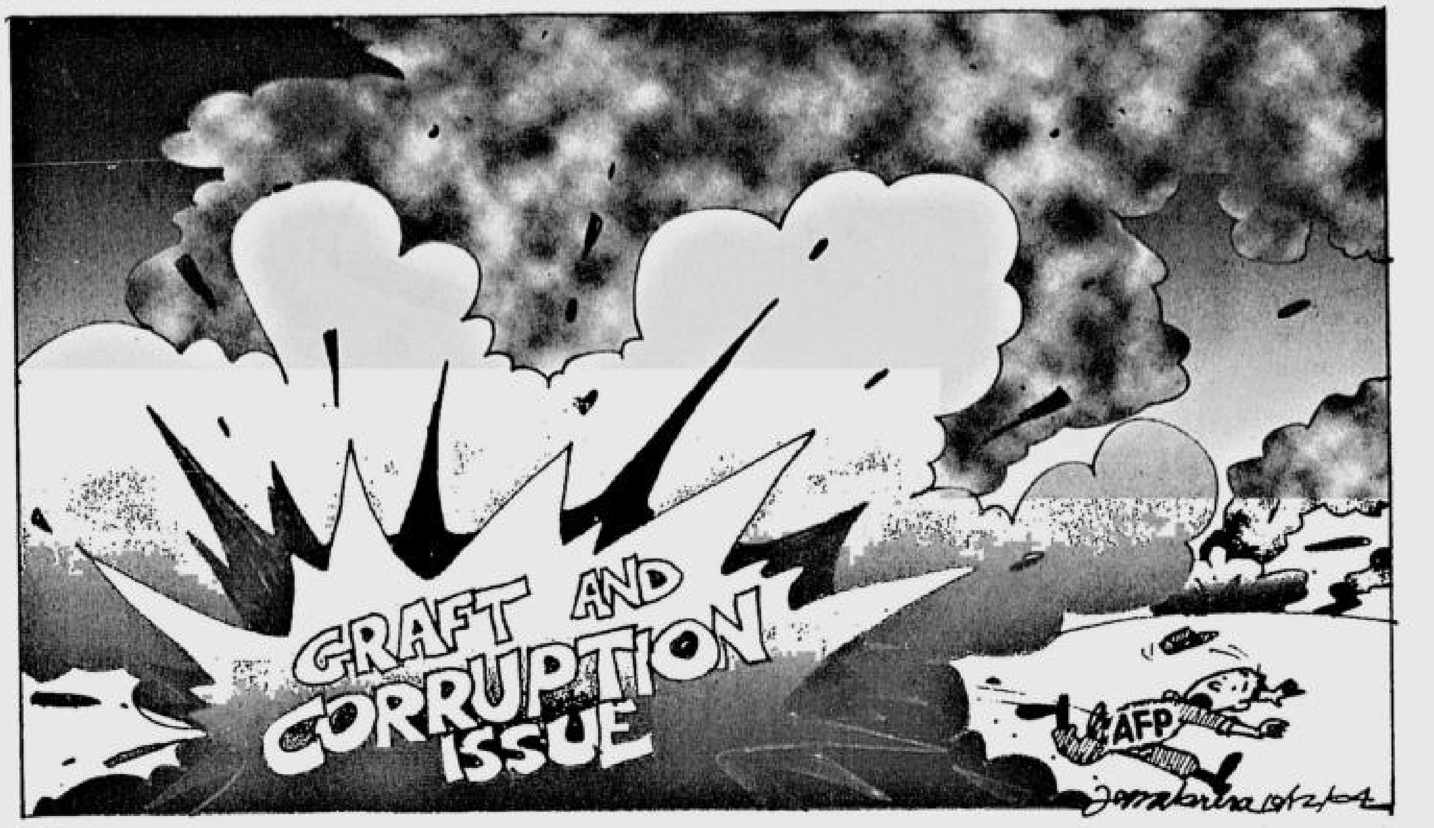

Unmasking AFP

EDITORIAL

SOME of the former colleagues of retired Commodore Rex Robles have told him to shut up and stop talking about graft cases involving military men. It was Robles who first provided more details about graft in the military when he disclosed last week that US authorities were investigating two generals and three Cabinet-level officials for supposedly maintaining huge bank accounts in the United States.

What are Robles' former colleagues and former classmates in the Philippine Military Academy afraid of? That the inquiry will go high up and affect the highest ranks of the Armed Forces of the Philippines? That it will demoralize the military? We say, Robles should continue talking about the cases that he knows of. We say, Robles' revelations should be the starting point of a thorough cleanup of the officer corps of the military.

If the generals and colonels and other ranking officers of the Armed Forces have nothing to hide, they should welcome a wide-ranging investigation of graft cases in the military. Instead of demoralizing the military, such an inquiry should boost the morale of the rank and file. Remember that one of the major complaints of the captains and lieutenants who staged the Oakwood Mutiny last year was that enlisted men were suffering because of graft in high places in the military.

We believe that if grafters in the military could be exposed, prosecuted and punished, that would set an example that would deter other officers who would commit graft at the expense of the lowly enlisted men. The foot soldiers who bear the brunt of the fighting would no longer have to go to the battlefield wearing shoes that easily wear out; or helmets that hardly give any protection against shrapnel; or substandard, supposedly bullet-proof jackets that are easily pierced by even the lowest-caliber bullets.

Instead of telling Robles to shut up, we should encourage him and others of his kind to keep on talking, to continue giving evidence of graft in the military so that a thorough, wide-ranging inquiry could be conducted. It's high time such an investigation was undertaken.

For a long time, since the martial law days of the dictator Ferdinand E. Marcos, the military was considered untouchable. It was as if it could do no wrong and was not subject to the same rules and laws as the rest of the people in government. President Marcos coddled the generals and colonels because he needed them to prop up his martial law regime. He gave them all sorts of perks and privileges, and they felt that they were the chosen ones in government and that they could do anything and not be called to account for their deeds.

Succeeding presidents—from Corazon C. Aquino to Gloria Macapagal Arroyo—have handled the military with kid gloves. They believed that they should not court the ire of the generals because they could destabilize the government and pull off coups d'etat. It's time the government abandoned this thinking and started going after the grafters in the military. Throw the grafters in the corps of officers in jail and watch morale rise in the rank and file of the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The Feliciano Commission, which investigated the Oakwood Mutiny, said in its report that "grievances about graft and corruption in the military...provide a fertile ground for the recruitment of officers and men for military intervention and even the overthrow of government." The Arroyo administration would be depriving military adventurists of such fertile ground and would be promoting political stability if it would conduct a thorough purge of grafters in the Armed Forces.

Terror vs terror

FOREIGN COMMENT

THE PALESTINIAN uprising shows no signs of abating, despite being the target of an all-out Israeli war. Over 3,000 Palestinians are estimated to have been killed in Israel's ruthless clampdown. Thousands of others have been injured. Israeli bulldozers have pulled down scores of Palestinians' houses.

A key casualty of this open war is the hope for peace, which has been relentlessly crushed. The Palestinians' dream of an independent state is far from attainable.

Regional and international circumstances are stacked up against the Palestinians. Washington's woolly "war on terrorism" has proved a windfall to incumbent Israeli Prime Minister Ariel Sharon. He tries to portray his atrocious crackdown on the Palestinians and their leaders as part of the global war on terrorism.

The Palestinians are not blameless, however. They have abysmally failed to forge a uniform agenda in fighting their battle. Palestinian authorities have not been immune to petty wrangles, occasionally developing into open struggles over power. Militarizing the Intifada has been a contentious issue. Taking up arms against Israeli civilians has done the Palestinian question more harm. *The Egyptian Gazette (Cairo, Egypt)*

Too late, too late?

VIEWPOINT

Juan L. Mercado

TO a people, famished and idle, the only form in which God dares to appear is work and the promise of food.—Ghandhi

The Mahatma's insight echoes in today's debate over a cash-strapped government's plan to distribute monthly P1,200 in food coupons to impoverished families who find themselves forced to skip meals.

The project follows Social Weather Stations' latest survey. Among other things, SWS reports: The number of Filipinos who had nothing to eat once a day, at least on one occasion in the previous three months, rose by 15 percent—the highest since March 2001.

Hunger in all areas spread, except in the Visayas. The National Capital Region and Luzon reported "new record highs." A majority of households (53 percent) felt they'd been beggared. In the previous quarter, 46 percent viewed themselves poor.

"Food is the first need of every human being," the World Food Congress at the Hague declared. "But for millions, that need is not met and this fundamental human right denied. This is intolerable."

Sawdust-dry statistics, on this "intolerable" situation, can smother how chronic hunger shatters lives and hopes. Periodic surveys, however, trace its latest contours. They permit comparison over time and strip away tunnel vision.

That helps. Many wedge critical issues, like poverty and hunger, within a narrow perspective: this administration's life-span and that of the previous regime. The problems are complex.

Poverty and its twin, hunger, are "rooted in a state of powerlessness," notes the latest UN report on its Philippine program: "A Common View, A Common Journey." They're "not merely the absence of assets and services to meet basic needs."

Philippine economic growth has been poor, and not pro-poor. This severely eroded people's health. TB, malaria and dengue persist at unacceptably high rates. So do maternal deaths: 172 per 100,000 live births, compared to Thailand's 44.

Hunger and the resulting vulnerability are rooted in our troubled past's social injustices. Persistent lags in reform will haunt our equally-troubled future.

Consider nutrition. Over an 11-year period, it improved by 5 percent. At that rate, "it will take half a century before we can eradicate malnutrition," wailed the fifth of six previous national nutrition surveys.

Conducted every five years, the sixth was released last July. The nation paid little attention then. Overseas Filipino worker Angelo de la Cruz's escaping terrorist beheading transfixed us.

Barely noticed, protein energy malnutrition ushers a bigger proportion of Filipino preschool children into premature graves than in poorer Bangladesh, Kenya or Tanzania, World Bank and Asian Development Bank reported in Early Childhood Development.

Four out of 10 pregnant women today are anemic. About the same number of mothers who breast-fed are afflicted. "These dry statistics document a lethal cycle: the ill-fed give birth to wizened infants who, in their turn, will mother a generation of dwarfed babies."

Poor nutrition stunts about half (47 percent) of kids in Negros Occidental and Northern Samar, a decade-earlier survey found.

"Give the poor reason for hope," Nobel Laureate Armatya Sen advises. Before chronic hunger hardens into despair, the administration is scraping funds for food stamps.

There are no illusions. This is a stop-gap measure. "The last thing a person dizzy from days without food needs is a teach-in on nationalist industrialization," Sen. Ralph Recto snapped.

But is this too little, too late? What about policies for the long haul? Our food comes from those who farm and fish, nowhere else. What's being done for them?

Yet, these very men and women are cut off from adequate credit, organization, research, extension to education and agrarian reform. The elite corner resources and cream off benefits. Voiceless indigents are powerless to shape decisions that allocate resources.

As a result, they do not "produce." Nor do they conserve ecosystems. Why should they? They have no stake in repackaging poverty. "If the rich could hire the poor to die for them, the poor would make a wonderful living," the Yiddish proverb says.

Parallel fiscal reforms are urgent for job creation. Food stocks mean nothing to a family that cannot buy them. Unlocking the human potential remains the central tension-filled question.

Due to media, the poor know their deprivation and premature graves are not inevitable. "Too little, too late" unleashes expectations of whirlwind force—which communists, party-list radicals and multiple fronts seek to saddle and ride.

Provide "unequal opportunity for the weak," Swedish economist Gunnar Myrdal counsels. For once, we must stack the cards to favor the poor. That's not charity but long denied social justice. It's also the only way we can survive as a free community.

Today's "obsolete social system favors inherited wealth and power… and dispenses the nation's resources in response to political imperatives," INQUIRER's Randy David notes. "No president can last while this system endures."

Just as succinctly, then-World Bank president Robert McNamara says: "Too little, too late is history's universal epitaph for political regimes which lost their mandates to demands of landless, jobless, disenfranchised and desperate men."

* * *

(*E-mail: juan_mercado@pacific.net.ph*)

Wrong turn

THERE'S THE RUB

Conrado de Quiros

THERE'S one disturbing thing the growing anxiety about the impending crisis—deepened rather than dispelled by the food coupons government proposes to hand out to the hungry—has sparked. That is the renewed talk about the possibility of emergency rule, or a plain authoritarian one, in this country. I've heard it in a number of fora lately: people wondering if an iron-fisted policy would not halt the economic decline, or forestall the riots.

I've even heard some people argue that iron-fisted rule might be good for democracy itself in the long run. Their argument runs thus: A stern ruler who has a vision, like Lee Kuan Yew or Mahathir, could arrest the slide and rev up the economic engine. A growing economy enlarges the scope of freedom, as witnessed by China which has greatly relaxed its rigid political structures because of rapid growth. In the end democracy thrives in its fullest sense, with the citizens having both bread and freedom.

I thought the last anniversary of martial law, which we marked only some weeks ago, would have put an end to this kind of speculation. But the specter of hunger seems to have revived it like an electric charge to an atrophied heart. The argument of course is not without its appeal—it looks good on paper. But that is only on paper. Marcos himself used the same argument many years ago, and showed the only paper it looks good on is the kind used in the toilet.

I have three arguments against it.

The first is that the people who are likely to declare emergency or authoritarian rule in this country are the very ones who caused the problem to begin with. Marcos declared martial law in 1972 expressly to arrest the country's slide into anarchy and chaos and to reform an oligarchic society. That was all very well except that he himself was the reason for the anarchy and chaos—he (and Imelda) had just about pissed off everyone in the country—and he himself had contributed greatly to social inequality. The latter would deepen during martial law, with the emergence of his cronies and their collective pillage of the country.

The one who is likely to usher in authoritarian rule today is President Macapagal-Arroyo, the very person who caused the fiscal crisis (or contributed most to it), the slide into anarchy and chaos, and the deepening divide between the rich and the poor. The last being the kind people used to call "social volcano" before martial law. It doesn't take a brain scientist to figure out what would happen if the disease were to pose as the cure, if the problem were to pose as the solution. Martial law gives the answer: The anarchy and chaos would grow, the social divide would widen.

We'll probably see even more anarchy and chaos if it should happen this time because of one thing: Unlike Marcos, GMA does not control the military.

My second argument against authoritarian rule, permanent or temporary, is that it misses the point about what makes other countries, particularly those in Southeast Asia, work. It is not authoritarianism. The various Southeast Asian countries have different political orders. Some are authoritarian (Malaysia, Singapore), some are liberal (Thailand, post-Suharto Indonesia), some are socialist (the Indochinese countries). Yet most of them have advanced tremendously. Malaysia and Singapore reduce us to scatological terms; and even Vietnam—ravaged by a long and bitter war—has caught up with us and is outstripping us. Clearly, what they have—and we don't—goes beyond the kind of political order they have.

What they have in fact—and we don't—is nationalism. Or for those who are allergic to the word, what they have—and we don't—is a sense of country, a sense of belonging to country, a passion for country. Several ways of saying the same thing. I cannot sufficiently belabor that point. Those countries have bigger crooks than us, but they have patriotic crooks. Suharto stole much more than Marcos, but he kept the money in Indonesia. Marcos stashed it abroad. Those are two different attitudes and ways of thinking, those are two different worldviews.

We want to copy from them—although that, too, is the one thing they have and we don't: they don't copy, they do things their way—let us copy their (com)passion or *malasakit* for their country. That's what works for them, that's what works for any people. Name one country that has gotten ahead in life that has a people that want to belong to another country. We can experiment with all the social and political orders we want, but none of it will work if we expect to be elsewhere at the end of the day, or when doomsday comes.

My third reason against authoritarianism is that we have already tried it while we have yet to try democracy. Yes, that's right, democracy. That is something we've never had, at least in its essence, which is giving power to the people. We've had rebellions, we've had revolutions, we've even had people power, but we've never given power to the people. That is what democracy is all about. What makes a democracy is not a strong republic, it is a strong people. That is what makes America a democracy, that is what makes the various countries of Europe a democracy, that is what makes at least some socialist countries a democracy: Power is wielded by their people.

Laws are nothing if they cannot be enforced, and the only ones that can really enforce the law are the people, not cops or soldiers. It is the universal expectation that public officials may not steal, and the universal demand for retribution to fall on those that do, that prevent officials from stealing. That is something we do not have. We do not have a strong people. We do not have an order where power rests in the hands of the people. We do not have a democracy.

It's time we tried it.

Good moves

POLITICAL TIDBITS

Belinda Olivares-Cunanan

PRESIDENT Macapagal-Arroyo's decision to appoint a defense secretary who come from the civilian sector is turning out to be a very sound one in the light of the case involving Army Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia. Defense Secretary Avelino Cruz, who had been a corporate lawyer prior to his appointment to the executive branch, is not a member of any Philippine Military Academy class and thus cannot be accused of being part of any military "clique" within the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

* * *

Secretary Cruz has acted swiftly on the problems brought to the fore in the Garcia case. He has centralized the procurement of military supplies and equipment (which used to involve 192 agencies within the AFP), under a single office. This will enable the government to pinpoint responsibility for the age-old problems of collusion over-pricing, substandard quality, etc. Cruz's appeal to the Church and the business sector to help clean up this process ought to be taken up as a constructive challenge.

The decision of AFP Chief of Staff Narciso Abaya to submit Garcia to the jurisdiction of the Ombudsman and a civilian court is also good. This will prevent accusations of whitewash in a *tayo-tayo* system.

* * *

AFP deputy chief of staff and spokesperson, Maj. Gen. Edilberto Adan, hit the nail on the head when he said that Garcia's case is partly the result of a "flawed, defective, weak system of, shall we say, check and balance." Everyone knows that the AFP procurement system has always been the major source of graft and corruption in the military. The huge procurements at the J-6 level spawn big opportunities for corruption; and this is repeated down the line, to the lowest level of the AFP where small procurements provide their own opportunities for petty corruption. How to install a check and balance system down the line is the problem. But I would think that at the field level, it's more difficult to commit corruption since the soldiers can see whether funds are being squandered. It's easier to conceal big-time corruption in Camp Aguinaldo.

* * *

There ought to be an award from the National Press Club for the journalist who blew the lid off the Garcia case—Star columnist Jarius Bondoc. Recall that the two Washington Post journalists who cracked open the Watergate case years ago bagged the Pulitzer Prize for their work. Bondoc has risked life and limb in the Garcia case as well as in previous controversies. He deserves society's plaudits for his guts and courage. *Mabuhay ka*, Jarius.

* * *

Sobriety has to reign in the controversy involving military officers. Retired Commodore Rex Robles cannot shirk from the responsibility of naming the officers whom he has alleged are on the US watch-list. He refuses to reveal their identity, saying he doesn't want to burn out his contacts. But if that were the case, he shouldn't have made it public; instead he should have brought the matter confidentially to the proper authorities. Now Robles looks like he was just out to grab headlines at the expense of the military establishment. If some officers resent his "exposé," it's not because they want to sweep military corruption under the rug. As Northern Command Chief Lt. Gen. Romeo Dominguez rightly said, reforms in the military can only strengthen it. But they want Robles to name names so as to clear the innocent.

* * *

Some representatives are reportedly upset with the AFP leadership for blocking "public access" to the statements of assets and liabilities and net worth of military officials. The lawmakers say that SALNs are public documents and that the Constitution guarantees public access to them. But Adan says that the SALNs cannot just be accessed by anyone. Access to them must be approved by the AFP command.

Indeed, SALNs are public documents that are required, under RA 6713, to be filed by all military personnel and civilian workers in government before April 30 of each year. The SALN is a three-page listing of a public servant's assets and liabilities as well as of his income and expenses. It includes those of all his relatives to the fourth degree of consanguinity, who are also in government. Five copies of the SALN are required to be submitted. In the case of military personnel, one copy each goes to the Office of the President, the Deputy Ombudsman, the AFP Chief of Staff, J-1 (personnel office) and the major service unit to which he belongs. Military officers appearing before the Commission on Appointments have to produce their SALN of the past five years prior to promotion.

* * *

But can just anyone really access an SALN? I don't think so, for this demand has to be determined by the appropriate government body, as the Constitution guarantees the right to privacy. Moreover, Sec. 21 of Article VI on the "Legislative Department," which allows legislative inquiries "in aid of legislation," stresses that these shall be held "in accordance with (Congress') duly published rules of procedure." Sec. 21 also guarantees that "The rights of persons appearing in or affected by such inquiries shall be respected."

* * *

Apparently, what triggered the legislators' stand on the military's SALN was the complaint of some media people that they couldn't get access to some generals' files. In turning down the media, the military command rightly pleaded that there is a procedure to follow. For example, in a legislative inquiry, documents may be summoned by the committee. But there are distinct rules to govern such access; it cannot be allowed just on the whims of media or some sensationalizing congressmen. If the lawmakers insist that anyone can access the SALNs of public officials, can any citizen ask for a Congress member's SALN then? I doubt it.

A life of bravery and dedication

AT LARGE

Rina Jimenez-David

YESTERDAY morning, as lawyer Arbet Sta. Ana-Yongco worked in her home office, an unidentified assailant entered through the unlocked door and shot her three times: twice in the neck and once in the face.

She was rushed to the hospital but she died shortly after, leaving behind her husband Filomeno, a lawyer-businessman, and three young children, the youngest of whom is less than a year old.

Arbet's passing sent shock waves through the women of Abanse! Pinay. Just a few months ago, during a meeting of the national council, she had taken part as one of the Cebu chapter delegates. She was a vivid presence, dynamic and outspoken during our discussions and group presentations, and she sent all the women into peals of laughter and delight when she danced during the socials.

It seems beyond credulity that a woman with so much life and pluck as Arbet should now be lying dead, cut down by an assassin's bullet.

But if we, who knew her only briefly—and were immediately struck by her zest for life—are struck down by a sense of loss and waste, how much more the women of Cebu, for whom Arbet was a sister, friend, colleague, ally and champion?

For Arbet, despite her relative youth, was a fighter and a passionate advocate of women's rights. Together with other women lawyers, she took on numerous cases pro bono—many of them still pending—most in behalf of women and children survivors of violence, and some involving prominent families.

In the process, Arbet earned many enemies, but despite all the perceived threats to her safety and life, says Alice Morada, also a lawyer and Abanse! Pinay officer in Cebu, "she wasn't security conscious at all, and even kept the door to her office unlocked at all times of the day."

* * *

DAYS before Arbet's murder, says Alice, she told friends about a man who had been stalking her. She suspected that he was a convicted rapist, sentenced to death on 26 counts of rape, who had somehow managed to escape from prison. Arbet had been a private prosecutor in that case.

Though her friends expressed alarm at the situation, Arbet didn't seem unduly disturbed and didn't even bother to have the stalker "blottered," that is, reported to the police.

By far the most prominent case that Arbet was involved in was the Ecleo case, where she was a private prosecutor in the parricide case filed against Ruben Ecleo, leader of the politically-influential cult Philippine Benevolent Missionary Association (PBMA), for the killing of his wife, Alona Bacolod.

"While all the other lawyers in Cebu were reluctant to take the case, fearing for their lives, only Arbet was brave enough to help the Bacolods," says Alice. Not only did Arbet exhaust all her lawyerly skills in pursuing the case against Ecleo, she also kept the case relentlessly in the public eye, tirelessly talking about it in the Cebu media, while using it as an example of the need to promote women's rights in the law.

If, as many fear, Arbet's murder was somehow connected to the Ecleo case, then her death would only be the latest in a string of killings that began in January 2002 when Alona Bacolod-Ecleo went missing and her body was discovered wrapped in a black garbage bag in a ravine.

* * *

FIVE months later, Ruben Ecleo was arrested after a long gunfight in the PBMA's headquarters in Dinagat Island in Surigao, but only after 16 cult members died in the effort to protect him. About the same time the gun battle was taking place, unidentified gunmen shot and killed four members of the Bacolod family, including Alona's parents, in Mandaue City in Cebu.

While Ecleo is now detained in a Cebu prison, the possibility of a legal loophole loomed when a judge in Barili, a town in Cebu, convicted an alleged "fall guy" for the murder of Alona. The confessed killer had implicated a brother of Alona, who had been killed in the Mandaue massacre, for planning her killing. As expected, Arbet loudly protested this seeming travesty of the law.

However, the ruling was overturned and the Supreme Court ordered the judge, who is nearing retirement, to be investigated for his actions.

"This is an attack on our justice system," Alice declared, on the killing of Arbet. "This can't go on, people shouldn't be killed simply for coming to the defense of the helpless!"

In life, Arbet fought courageously for her beliefs, preferring to practice her legal vocation—ensuring that the fruits of the justice system are made available even to the most disadvantaged—rather than seek shelter in safer and more lucrative branches of law. In death, those who knew and loved her honor Arbet for her bravery, spirit and dedication.

* * *

PAOLO Santos, Pido, Sugarfree and other stellar performers are the main attractions during "Sheel's Acoustic Night," tonight at eight at the Salo Bar on Sgt. Esguerra St. in Quezon City.

The benefit concert is being mounted to help raise money for the treatment of Sheel Lamar, a first year high school student of the Community of Learners who is undergoing chemotherapy for cancer of the eye.

Sheel spoke on behalf of the elementary graduates during last April's graduation rites, testifying to how her classmates and teachers and the entire COLF community helped see her through her painful and difficult "chemo" sessions. She went into remission soon after, making it possible for her to continue her studies and graduate from grade school. But her cancer has returned and her family now faces steep expenses for her continued treatment. Friends have pitched in. In fact, tonight's concert was organized by the officemates of another COLF parent who had heard of the plight of Sheel and her parents. The Lamars would like to thank in advance all of tonight's performers for offering their time and talent for free.

Readers react

SENSE AND SENSIBILITY

Bambi L. Harper

HERE'S an interesting and thought-provoking historical tidbit sent in by Daniel Dizon of Pampanga from an article in "Balita Today" (2/19/1991), published by Floro Mercene in Los Angeles.

Mercene claims that Spain established a shipbuilding and repair yard in the town of San Blas, north of Acapulco, where Filipinos were brought to work. Many of these Filipinos settled in Mexico and their descendants are still found in that town. Even more interesting is his claim that a Filipino, Antonio Miranda Rodriguez, was one of the 11 founder-settlers in 1781 of Ntra. Sra. de los Angeles de la Porciuncula, which is now plainly known as LA.

The expedition to settle Loreto and La Paz in Baja California was undertaken by Fr. Juan Salvatierra, S.J. He was accompanied by soldiers and settlers from San Blas, some of whom were Filipinos. When Father Salvatierra died, the Loreto mission was taken over by Fr. Juan Ugarte who commissioned a small ship to further explore what is now known as the sea of Cortez, which separates Baja from the Mexican mainland. The ship was built around 1720, near the Colorado River. Lo and behold, historian Bill Mason of the Los Angeles Museum of Natural History in LA identifies the shipbuilder as Gaspar Molina, originally from Pampanga, then residing in San Blas. The ship was about 60 feet long and christened "El Triunto (Triumfo?) de la Cruz." Father Ugarte was able to explore the gulf with it. Mason apparently identified eight other Filipinos who lived in San Blas, including one called Chino Velez, originally from Cagayan. He arrived in Loreto in 1768, married a girl from Sonora and joined the army. So anyone interested in doing a doctorate on these early Filipinos with a lust for seafaring and travel should head for Mexican shores.

That's the good news. And now for the rest of it. Here is a speech delivered, would you believe, in 1988, on the state of justice in the country. At the time it was easy enough to blame Ferdinand Marcos for any and all imagined ills. (But since the situation persists to this day, we may have to look into ourselves for answers.)

At the time there were 340,000 cases pending in the courts. (God knows how many there are right now.) Many crimes were unsolved: the murders of Jaime Ferrer, Lean Alejandro, Evelio Javier, Cesar Climaco, to name a few; and the perpetrators could just not be caught. Members of law enforcement agencies were suspected to be involved in bank robberies committed in broad daylight, and again nobody was caught or jailed as far as memory serves. The favorite residential village of the masterminds of kidnappings, who were earning in the millions, was (and remains so) the plush village of Fairview or some remote barrio of Cavite.

Mr. Ramon Sy, in a speech before the Integrated Bar in Cebu 16 years ago, traced the root of the problems to the lack of equity and justice. The question to ask ourselves is whether the situation is any different today; or has it worsened?

At that time, democracy had been technically restored and the legislators were meeting in Baguio (one wonders why these lawmakers couldn't meet in Manila and save us some money, but that's another story) to identify the country's problems in the order of urgency.

Poverty alleviation was item No. 5. The government came up with band-aid measures as it still does. The solution from Mr. Sy's point of view was massive investments, but there was the question of the judiciary getting involved in business, like the Supreme Court decision on the bidding for the Manila Hotel. The fact was there was P4.5 billion worth of assets tied up in court litigations between commercial banks and defaulting borrowers. The Asset Privatization Trust was also trying to privatize P16 billion worth of litigated accounts.

These were assets totally unutilized and deteriorating, and they could have been generating jobs and progress. (There are still such assets to this day. And just think of the Presidential Commission on Good Government and the lack of accounting from that agency). Had the courts resolved the cases with a sense of urgency, would we have recovered the confidence of investors, or did we end up with more con-men?

As a successful businessman, Mr. Sy believed that the assets tied up in litigation and the ease with which litigants could tie up each other's properties were the biggest deterrent to investments. (Should I say as in Piatco or Amari?)

It isn't that people don't sue each other in other countries, but there the issues are generally resolved quickly. Justices are aware of the stakes involved. Here many cases are in permanent limbo, with both the contending parties ending up as losers, and the jobs that might have been created puffing out not unlike pipe dreams.

The honorable representatives listed the state of justice as No. 13 in the order of priority, and the problem of graft and corruption as No. 8. There was graft in government because the bureaucracy was poorly paid and there was no money to increase their salaries. (I guess that's what happened to Army General Carlos Garcia). And collections were way below target.

Then President Corazon Aquino ordered the swift prosecution of the more brazen tax evaders. My countrymen, pardon me while I yawn. Haven't we heard all these before and aren't you just a wee bit tired and fed up with them?

Churchgoers

YOUNG BLOOD

Jonas C. Soltes

We want to know what the young are thinking about. What are their thoughts on current issues? We welcome contributions from the twentysomething and below.—Ed.

SOME say that if one wants to see different classes of people, the best place to go to is a public supermarket. But while attending Mass in the Naga City Metropolitan Cathedral, I realized that a public supermarket is not the best place after all. The real "melting pot" is a church.

In a public supermarket, what I see is just the wide gap between the rich and the poor, and the unforgiving poverty afflicting many of my Filipino brothers and sisters. In a church, what I see are people who are equal in the eyes of God but haunted by dissimilar airs of despair, joy, sorrow, tumult, and turmoil.

Churchgoers' appearances contrast as their reasons in going to church differ. Some resemble Hollywood celebrities and look like Bill Gates' kin. Others are in the simplest garments, complete though with the rips and stains. Some are clad as if fabrics are running out of stock. Others are dressed as if the fiscal crisis is nautical miles away.

There are those who go to church because going to church has been routine. There are those who go to thank God because they have so much. There are those who go to ask God for things which they have been asking since the time of Adam. And there are those who go because they are too weary with life's yokes.

Meet some of the resident churchgoers.

A vendor from the mountains always asks God why very few buy the bananas, the wild yams, and the *lube-lube* shoots she is selling. She is asking why she only earns little more than P20 a day, although her departed husband left her with six hungry malnourished children. She is asking why *lugaw* cannot fill stomachs for a week.

A father asks God why his only daughter has grown up with a rebellious heart. He is asking what wrong he has done in the way he reared her. He is asking why he continues loving her though she never loves him back.

A mistress always asks God why he keeps on with her man though she knows that having an affair with him is wrong. She is asking why she can't love another but him. She is asking why she can't be free—free from scorn and sin.

A public school teacher asks God why he holds dear his Grade-5 pupils in a far-flung barrio elementary school though he is overworked and poorly compensated. He is asking why he continues to be happy serving as a teacher though he has to walk several kilometers of almost forgotten trail to his class. He is asking why laryngitis and tuberculosis can't stop him from being a devoted teacher.

A policeman asks God why he always chooses to be honest and live *isang kahig, isang tuka* while many of his buddies get filthy rich by extortion. He is asking why he can't be just another *kotong* cop so he can pay the tuition fees of his son in the university on time. He is asking why he remains a low-ranking policeman in spite of his fanatical service to his country.

A district representative asks God why he can't help but take the pork barrel intended for his congressional district. He is asking why he can't serve his constituents with utmost sincerity.

A student asks God why she always fails the Molecular Biology exams no matter how hard she studies. She is asking why she can't make her parents proud of her. She is asking why she can't make them happy by topping the President's List.

A nurse asks God why he has to leave his loved ones and suffer homesickness in search of a brighter future in the United Kingdom. He is asking why he can't just work in his Lupang Hinirang: He is asking why the British pound is his only way to a comfortable life for his family.

A physician asks God why he has to be a nurse. He is asking why he needs another profession, apart from his vocation. He is asking why he has to sacrifice his being a public doctor of medicine to follow his assistant nurse abroad, who, like him, had chosen practicality over patriotism.

A journalist asks God why no one is influenced by his writings. He is asking why no one seems to be touched by his noble ideas about hope for the Philippines. He is asking why no one seems to be affected by his call for the adoption of higher standards for choosing leaders.

A college professor asks God why many of his former students took the wrong way. He is asking what false ideology he might have taught them. He is asking why some of them became mere traditional politicians, notorious criminals, or Satan's terrestrial advocates.

A farmer asks God why a typhoon has to destroy his crops—all his properties. He is asking why he must perspire a bucketful and subsist on canned sardines each day. He is asking why tilling the earth beneath his feet has been a lowly means of livelihood though it has fed hungry stomachs since the Stone Age.

A wretched mother asks God why all the "faithful sheep" get poorer and poorer while all the "prodigal sons grow richer and richer to become millionaires and billionaires. She is asking why the Good Samaritans are locked up in prisons while the Pharisees are rewarded with high positions. She is asking why those who decide to live morally must toil like carabaos and be treated like dirt while those who choose to be drug-traffickers, master cheaters, and plunderers are drinking whiskies and vodkas like there is no tomorrow.

People in a church, really, are from "all walks of life," not like people in a public supermarket. They may dress up similarly or may bear a resemblance to each other in the way they sing and twist their faces. But each one of them is different. They are like zebras. They look identical but are striped uniquely.

They are unlike because life has bequeathed them with burdens of varying weights.

Their pleas may remain unrequited; but they find going to church comforting, especially when everything is ominously dark and unbearable. They just hope that a day will come when God will give them His justice.

If loudspeakers were to be connected to their prayers, all those who would hear them would end up crying and forgiving.

Jonas C. Soltes, 19, is a BS Biology student of Ateneo de Naga University. He's an apprentice of the Pillars, the official student publication of Ateneo de Naga University.

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Symbol of disrespect?

DISRESPECT for our flag is evident even in sports events held to foster sportsmanship, loyalty and other values, which should help develop our youth to become good citizens.

At the Araneta Coliseum, where quite a number of basketball games are held, a small faded Philippine flag is unfurled near the ceiling, on the same level as that of eight commercial pennants of equal size. I strongly feel that when displayed in our country, our national flag should always be flown higher than all other flags, banners or whatsoever, and certainly not alongside pennants advertising certain products.

For two UAAP seasons, I have called the attention of the supervisors of this facility to this infraction but to no avail. One wonders if the owners of this popular venue, who are relatives of a former Philippine president and of an incumbent senator of the land, are aware of this disrespect to our national symbol.. Since many sports events held here are televised, this negative message is beirig shown nationwide.

Have the senators, congressmen and other government officials, alumni of the schools represented in the league who avidly watch the games noticed this? Don't they care? Has commercialism taken such a hold of us that commercial sponsors are given equal importance to what stands for respect and love of our country? That sense of pride that wells through us when we sing the national anthem facing our flag cannot be felt when we are looking at a worn out symbol of our country. National symbols give substance to the abstract esteem and value citizens should have for their country. Disregard for such could be a big reason why many of our citizens think nothing of leaving our country and changing citizenship.

—CONSUELO JOAQUIN PAZ,
61 F. Agoncillo St., UP Diliman,
Quezon City

GSIS' P35.6-billion revenue

WE are former members of the board of trustees who worked with Winston Garcia, president of the Government Service Insurance System, for three years. For the most part, we find the criticism against him misplaced and unfair. He has been severely maligned for his large salary. That is not his doing. Before he was appointed to the GSIS, the salary structure of the GSIS organization had already been set.

The long-standing problems of the GSIS are the low collection efficiency of loans and premiums, substantial revenue leakages in terms of delayed collections, and under-remittance and non-remittance by agencies of premium and loan amortizations. These were aggravated by decades of poor record-keeping and collection processes. These have likewise undermined proper account management and, in effect, the long-term viability of the system.

During the last three years of our term as trustees, Garcia instituted comprehensive and wide-ranging reforms to once and for all address all these problems. These include the successful integration of on-line systems and data bases, massive updating of members' records, adoption of the premium-based and cross-default policies, and improved housekeeping operations, which resulted in the Commission On Audit providing the GSIS, for the last three years, a clean opinion on its operations.

Unfortunately, since the Asian financial crisis, all financial institutions, both public and private, have been having difficulties improving profitability. Notwithstanding such difficulties, GSIS' growth has been very impressive. For the record, the GSIS posted net operating revenues of P29.5 billion in 2002 and P35.6 billion in 2003, for an increase of 20.67 percent. The GSIS is expected to generate a net operating revenue of P38 billion this year.

Because of Garcia's very able and competent management of the system during the last three years, GSIS' viability and financial strength have been assured well into the future.

—JUSTICE HERMOGENES D. CONCEPCION JR., LEONORA VASQUEZ-DE JESUS, FULGENCIO S. FACTORAN JR., FLORINO O, IBAÑEZ, AIDA C. NOCETE, ELLENITA T. MARTINEZ, former GSIS Board of Trustees (1998-Aug. 30, 2004)

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Unwelcome in Chinatown

THIS is in reference to the news report (PDI, 9/25/04) about the plan of the Philippine Amusement and Gaming Corp. to establish a casino in Chinatown, which it calls "entertainment arcade." Pagcor officials claim the casino will have only slot machines; and card games and "unlimited gambling for businessmen" will not be allowed there. Their statement should be taken with a grain of salt.

The "slot machines arcade" or "entertainment arcade" will be converted into a full-scale gambling establishment. Right from the horses' mouth, they said that the City of Manila will be given P10 million each month for hosting Pagcor's "entertainment facilities" in Chinatown. From that hefty monthly offer of Pagcor, it is crystal clear that gambling will go beyond slot machines into higher stakes. How else are they going to generate the extra P10 million each month for city hall?

Pagcor officials should know that the real rich Chinese have long left Chinatown. They are now in exclusive posh villages, such as those in Makati and Ayala Alabang. Those who have remained in Chinatown belong to the middle class doing business for honest living. They do not aspire to become rich overnight by games of chance. In short, a gambling casino is not welcome in Chinatown because it will jeopardize the well-being of the Chinese community.

—L. ENCHONG SEE,
enchong@eudoramail.com

Senators' act argues for Senate's abolition

WE have a fiscal crisis. We will soon have an energy crisis. We have the budget deficit and debt problems to attend to. But what do our good and honorable senators do? Investigate escort service. Investigate (again) the Smokey Mountain project. Investigate Napocor and the government-owned and -controlled corporations.

I am appalled at the Senate's sense of priority. Are our senators just grandstanding? Or afraid to make unpopular decisions? Just plain clueless and irresponsible perhaps?

On the critical issues of today, the reaction from the senators is almost always negative. After all, it is much easier to criticize, find fault and blame others, oppose and object, without having to offer possible solutions.

The actuations and behavior of many senators can only lend credence and support to the proposition that this once august body be abolished.

—FERDINAND G. VILLAFUERTE

The teachers' children

MANY of my brothers and sisters in the teaching profession find our compensation and benefits becoming less and less attractive, especially when compared with those of public servants in other government agencies, particularly in government-owned and -controlled corporations. In fact among professionals, the teachers receive the least.

Listening to stories about Filipinos teaching abroad and to testimonies from those who have worked there, the suggestion to work abroad is tempting. This doesn't mean that I envy them or wish I am in their shoes. I admire their strong desire to lift their loved ones from the depths of poverty and mediocrity. I admire their courage to pursue this goal, never mind if it meant living in distant and unknown lands, in the unfamiliar culture of other races, away from their families.

With the many threats and dangers facing our society nowadays—drug addiction, pornography, sexual exploitation, terrorism and insurgency among others—who would still wish to live away from their children? Who would not want to share his expertise with his countrymen instead of with other peoples? Who would not want to help the deteriorating educational system in the country recover? Who would wish to see his country at the tail end in any field of endeavor?

I believe our teachers abroad have the same objective with those who are left here to serve. I believe that deep within their hearts is the longing to serve their country and their countrymen. Like what I've said, I neither envy nor detest those teachers who left to serve in other countries. I don't have plans to follow their footsteps either, though the state of affairs in our country continues to deteriorate. But I do wish to make this appeal to them—"*sana*" (I wish) when you get richer, older and wiser, you come back to your own children, no the Filipino people.

—IRENE U. DAYANDANTE,
DMC Veneracion H/S,
Pamplona, Camarines Sur

INBOX

Dear Readers, Text us your comments, suggestions and views on today's news or how it was delivered. Tell us about the news you are interested in and the things you want improved in your favorite newspaper. Text INQUIRER <section keyword> name/city/message and send to 283 (Smart) or 2207 (Globe). The section keywords are indicated in the logo of each section.

Ano sa palagay nyo?

If given the chance to vote, whom would you vote for: John Kerry (Democrat) or George Bush (Republican)? Why?

John Kerry. Honest, Lots of guts. No hiding around the BUSH policy.
—**peter p. lopez**, *parañaque city*

kerry, coz he is perceived as anti-war. I love peace.
—**rolly zantua**, *legazpi city*

KERRY. A Bush win wil mean escalation of terrorism worldwide. Extremists luv Bush bec dey get 2 try new ways of lethal bombing. KERRY, it's d only way my 20-yr-old US marine nephew will be prevented from deployment to Iraq 4 combat duty come January 05.
—**Raul Pamintuan**, *bacoor*

BUSH! Fight against terrorism is my primary concern & an experienced leader like BUSH can handle it.
—**Romel Tabug**, *Manila*

Kerry. coz Bush deceived d people about Iraq having weapons of mass destruction in invading Iraq. dis will be Bush's waterloo.
—**Gary Teh**, *Manila*

i rather vote John Kerry (Democrat) coz everybody loves freedom.
—**Mei-meilyn Bisman**, *Jolo, Sulu*

I vote for GEORGE BUSH Because of his strong stand against TERRORISM and his HELPING 3rd world countries' economies.
—**RUTH F. MONDIA**, *Bacolod City*

neither. coz whatever dey say bout cooperation with others & protecting d world, dey wil ultimately do what's best 4 d U.S., sacrificing all else.
—**Elmer Alop**, *Olongapo*

Bush, he has done so much damage WORLDWIDE that he ought to clean up his mess before leaving office.
—**paul ganaban**, *bacolod*

Will vote 4 John KERRY! Why? BEC Democrats are PEACELOVERS while Republicans are WAR MONGERS!
—**ERIC KING CHUA**, *Tondo, Manila*

john kerry, bcoz he thinks what he says & addresses issues with passion & patience, not haste to waste.
—**rolando p. sinajon**, *digos city*

Bush bcoz d world is at war and d world, not just d U.S., nids a strong leader who is determined 2 defeat terrorism.
—**C. M. de los Reyes**, *marikina*

i wil choose john, he is more capable. 1st round of debate shows reasons why.
—**poly dela pena**, *batangas city*

I would prefer to vote to Mr. Kerry. bcoz Bush is a war freak! Who knows, maybe we are next? And we/I want peace.
—**BENJAMINE C. VARGAS**, *Malabon City*

i vote 4 G. Bush bcos he deserves 2be re-elected as Pres. of d USA 4 his wide & worthy experiences esp. fighting terrorism.
—**jimmark c. avillon**, *digos city*

George BUSH. He has already shown the kind of LEADERSHIP The World NEEDS right NOW!
—**Prime Matienzo**, *Tanay, Rizal*

I wud vote 4 john kerry because our impossible dream of having world peace might become possible with him as US president.
—**marco bernardo**, *baguio city*

After watching Fahrenheit 9/11, I would go with John Kerry. Bush administration is an administration of lies. Bush should not be elected again.
—**Arvin M. Malabanan**, *Batangas City*

Not dat m a huge fan of Kerry but i think anyone but d warfreak Bush can do better so I'll vote 4 kerry. Look. No WMD weapons of mass destruction in Iraq.
—**renan piamonte**, *calamba*

Bush. We nid a tough & decisive leader 2 get rid of terrorists who r threatening our freedom & our lives.
—**Emmanuel Co**, *QC*

John Kerry, para makontrol lahat ng krisis, corruption, illegal transaction (drugs etc), oil price, crime (which is worsening now)
—**Liezel D.Flores**, *Taguig*

john kerry coz bush is a warlord.
—**redentor caguioa**, *san pedro, laguna*

george bush bcoz i believe in what he can do 4 all of us
--**charles matthew santos**, *samal, bataan*

JOHN KERRY, If a DEMOCRAT is sitting as US President, ALMOST ALWAYS, No WAR in the world.
—**chris**, *manila*

i will vote kerry because of change. US fared badly with Bush Admin. To win d war on terror we must first win d peace.
—**gerry singson**, *vigan city*

i go for bush. So the fight against terrorism would continue. Let him finish what he has started.
—**ahdan nabong**, *pasay city*

I'l vote 4 john kerry bcoz i think he has a sense of decency and more humane than his opponent.
—**maila Garcia**, *tanauan city*

kahit cno John wag lang dat SOB (Son of Bush) hu bullies d U.N. n terrorizes d whole world 4 his evil selfish end.
—**Larry Novenario**, *Las Piñas*

john kerry (Democrat) bcoz he can govern America better than bush.
—**jesusa tabarangao**, *quezon city*

i would vote 4 John Kerry because Bush is a war freak and his continuous presence in d white house is a threat 2 world peace.
—**olan Rodolfo**, *manila*

ayl vote 4 john kerry coz aside fr being doubly qualified 4 d position of president, john kerry is a lesser evil.
—**hayudini h. indanan**, *cotabato city*

john kerry because a leader not just has to be strong, he too must have sound judgment dealing with difficult situations.
—**jeremy insigne**, *baguio*

I will vote for George Bush because he fights terrorism.
—**Renato P. Sunico**, *Mandaluyong city*

i wil definitely vOte 4 Kerry 4 a change. Bush has nOthing to prOve mOre. He fooled d wOrld wen he invaded iraq.
—**andy usop**, *q.c.*

I am for john kerry.
—**sigfredo sengco**, *pasig city*

john kerry, I'd rather choose a Democrat rather than a self-confessed Republican claiming as one against terrorism.
—**april cambia**, *san pedro laguna*

I'll vote for Kerry for a change. A single term should b enough 4 Bush. World peace will be endangered.
—**Roberto Lacsamana**, *Calamba*

I would vote KERRY so WE WON'T have a PRES. who is a WAR MONGER who would sacrifice PEOPLE and PEACE 4 oil n money 4 self interest
—**ROMMEL ILAO**, *Muntinlupa*

I will vote 4 JOHN F. KERRY. Because his initials are JFK. Just like JOHN F. KENNEDY, They're both from Massachusetts.
—**GERALD NACIONALES**, *Pasig City*

John KERRY, PEACEFUL
—**bart gatmaitan**, *las pinas city*

john kerry! bush errd in saying Iraq has WMDs wile until now he can't present one. a true leader shld say da truth & live it!
—**oliver allen f. galupo**, *cagayan de oro city*

John Kerry bcuz another term 4 bush cud spell doom 4 world peace. Down with peace saboteurs!
—**malou Domingo**, *marikina*

definitely i vote for john kerry because i want a peaceful world. The war on Iraq makes this world unsafe.
—**randolph paculguen**, *pasig city*

I will vote 4 kerry bcoz i dont want a war freak president the reason why poor countries suffers from oil price hike.
—**james tiong**, *masbate city*

A man lyk bush who views d world in black n white and wid an extreme conservative agenda must b stopped b4 he does further damage.
—**boy oliva**, *naga*

i will vote for John Kerry because he has a better plan, credibility and courage to win the war against terrorists.
—**gloria cajilog**, *pasig city*

i'll vote 4 john kerry 4 a change. i'm tired of war freaks, anyway!
—**sandra mae**, *jorolan, davao*

john kerry he value human life than his rival
—**RAUL SADIWA**, *COTABATO City*

George Bush (Republican) simply bcoz he is smart, still on his stand as a leader.
—**Christopher Carmona**, *Parang, Maguindanao*

I would vote John Kerry so dat d world cud finally get over w/ d nightmares of the war. —**Analisa Salumbides**, *Quezon City*

my vote will go for george bush coz america needs a leader with a strOng heart!
—**Wallyngail R. Yumul**, *Isabela*

I am for bush bec. He is decisive and not afraid to make unpopular decisions. He is not wishy washy like kerry.
i would vote for john kerry by elimination as bush is not fit to be a leader. He cannot accept failure nor defeat.
—**cherrie ong**, *pasig*

kerry—priority domestic affairs and not nosy 2 interfere with international matters.
—**obet huele**, *cavite*

John Kerry because he possesses d qualities of being a good president of USA.
—**Moses Upao**, *Ermita, Manila*

i prefer JOHN KERRY bec. no. 1, anti-Vietnam war conviction in 1970s; no. 2, anti-US Policy sending troops to Iraq.
--**Romy Almonte**, *Taguig*

I am for BUSH, he is tough, he fights terrorism without let-up and he stands firmly on his policies.
—**Edwin B. Trinidad**, *DOSCST, Mati, Davao Oriental*

I vote 4 KERRY bcoz he is no chicken while George is not a genuine burning Bush but an arsonist!
—**Raymundo B. Mendoza, Jr.**, *Los Baños*

Across the NATION

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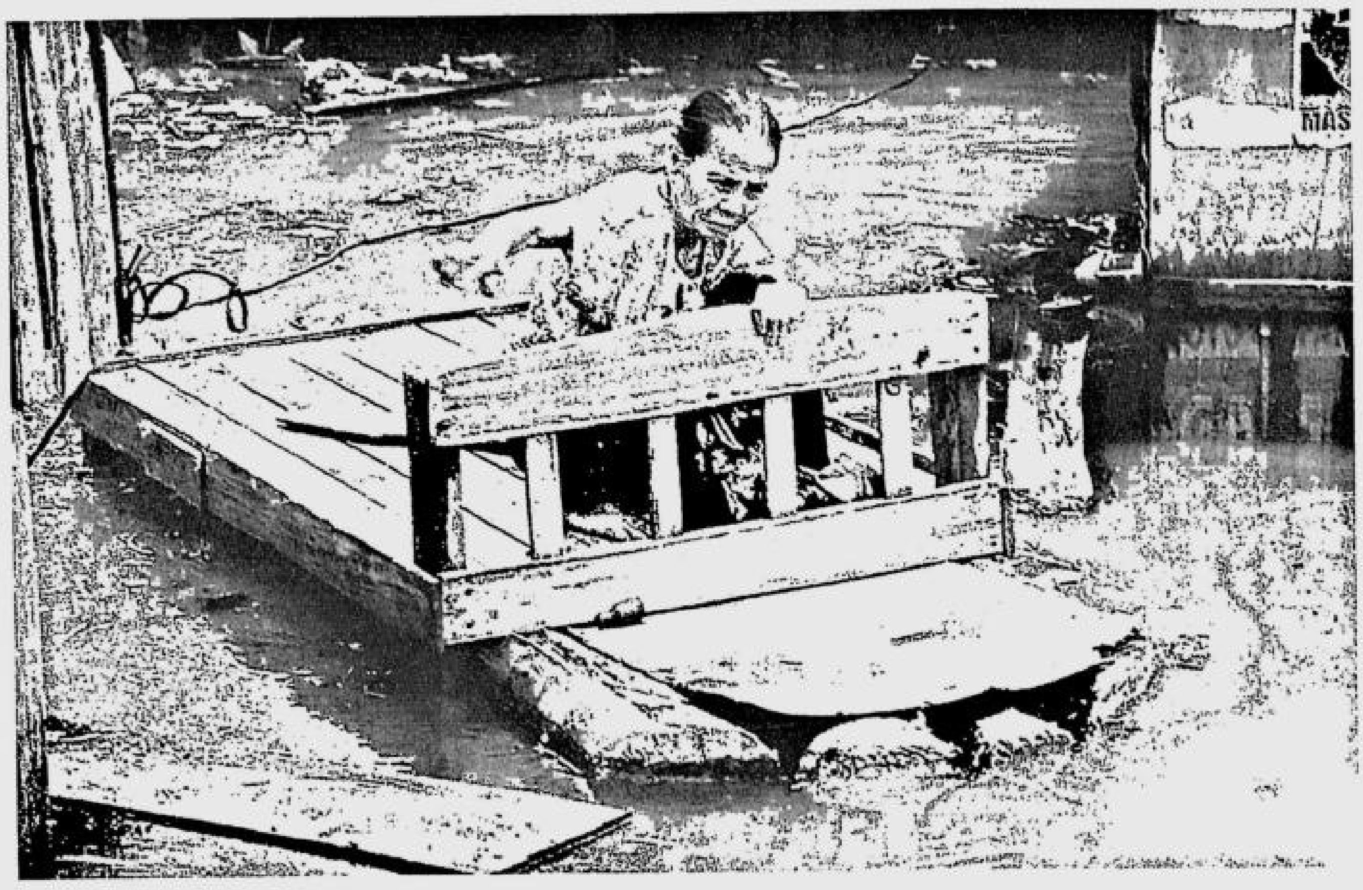

BEDLAM
A woman finds herself in familiar yet strange surroundings as she stays on her bed that floated among debris from her house in Sultan Kudarat. The town was flooded when rains caused the Rio Grande River to overflow.

AFP

Clark defends monopoly of water supply inside ex-US military airbase

CLARK SPECIAL ECONOMIC ZONE—The state-owned Clark Development Corp. (CDC) defended its policy of maintaining a single water supplier in the economic zone, saying this setup has led to rates that are now the lowest in the country.

The rates by the Clark Water Corp. (CWC)—at P11.32 per cubic meter for domestic use and P25.43 per cu. m. for commercial use—include full sewerage services with a centralized wastewater treatment facility, said Romeo Dyoco, CDC vice president for business development and corporate services.

Dyoco's statement, released on Thursday, came on the heels of a query by Domingo Bagaporo, director of the infrastructure services of the Department of Trade and Industry and the Board of Investments.

The CDC did not release a copy of Bagaporo's letter but Dyoco said it "raised the concerns by some businesses/industries located inside other ecozones and freeports regarding high water costs and alternative water sources."

Bagaporo was quoted as saying that "from our initial research, we learned that the water utility rates at CSEZ is being determined by a private utility provider in the area."

Dyoco said the CWC is a subsidiary of the France-based Veolia Water Corp., formerly the Vivendi International. CWC operates the utility under a concession agreement.

He said the government has "fully awarded to CWC all water rights in Clark, including both surface and groundwater resources."

He did not say if water quality was among the concerns of Bagaporo given that toxic wastes from the United States' military operations for nearly a century in Clark had allegedly contaminated its water supply. *Tonette Orejas, PDI Central Luzon Desk*

NPA threat vs dam growing, say cops

BAYOMBONG, Nueva Vizcaya—Police and military officials here have stepped up security measures at the Casecnan Multi-Purpose Irrigation and Power Project (CMIPP), following reports of intensified activities of suspected communist rebels in the area.

Senior Supt. Felix Caddali, chair of the Casecnan Multi-Sectoral Task Group (CSTG), said he had placed police and Army units on full alert to stop planned attacks by New People's Army rebels on the CMIPP's power facilities at the Nueva Vizcaya-Nueva Ecija border.

Senior Supt. Julio de Luna, CSTG vice chair and commander of the 308th police mobile group, confirmed that suspected rebels had stepped up extortion activities against businessmen and project contractors in the towns near the CMIPP.

He cited a recent incident in San Jose City, where suspected rebels burned the house of a contractor who reportedly refused to heed their demand for payment of revolutionary taxes.

"Lately, businessmen and [members of] prominent families [have been] receiving demand letters, and their number is greater than what was recorded in the previous years," De Luna said.

He also said a contractor of a government project in Carranglan town is giving at least P40,000 a month to the rebels.

"We anticipate that the rebels will be more active in the coming months, because the harvest season is the best time for them to have sufficient stockpile of food," De Luna said.

But Raymund Cunningham, general manager of California Energy-Casecnan, the firm that owns CMIPP, said the company has not received any demand letter from the NPA.

De Luna said he was concerned about the recent pullout of the Army's 71st Infantry Division, which caused a "security vacuum" in at least six barangays near the CMIPP area.

"This problem has forced us to over-extend our areas of responsibility but we are worried that we may no longer be able to cope (with the situation) in the coming days," he said.

Fritz Padilla, chief security officer of the CMIPP's power plant site at Barangay Pauan in Pantabangan, said militiamen stationed at Army detachments in Barangays Burgos and General Luna in Carranglan town have run out of supplies for the past three months.

Padilla said the CSTG should also hold dialogues with residents of neighboring villages and warn them against unauthorized entry into the CMIPP compound. *Melvin Gascon, PDI Northern Luzon Bureau*

Capiz folk to hold 'aswang' feast to rid province of haunting image

ROXAS CITY—For years, Capiz has been regarded as a haven of evil persons possessed with black magic.

Capiceños have been—and still are—being derisively called "aswang"—half-bodied, flying witches hungry for human flesh and blood.

Such ugly notion of Capiz and its people has taken its toll on the progress of a province otherwise abundant in natural resources and tourist attractions.

This year, exasperated Capiceños are saying, enough is enough. They will try to shake off such negative image and demystify the much-derided and feared "aswang" myth.

On Oct. 29-30, the nation will witness the first-ever witch-oriented festivity in the land—the Aswang Festival.

It will showcase the "real" Capiz and its people, said Thursday Ortiz, one of the organizers from the Dugo Capiznon Inc., a non-government organization leading the daunting task of rectifying the age-old, grotesque image of the province and its residents.

The hotel and restaurant association of Roxas City would join the festival at the Dinggoy Roxas Civic Center. No, human beings are not part of the menu.

One of the major activities of the two-day affair is a cultural show devoted to mythical witches. This will be performed by the Sigmahanon Foundation under the directorship of Alphonsus Tesoro.

Roxas City Mayor Antonio del Rosario of Capiz's capital city said he hoped that this would paint a sunnier picture of Capiz and Roxas City. *Felipe V. Celino, PDI Visayas Bureau*

ASWANG FESTIVAL
Boo!

Trader says he didn't pay ransom for his freedom

MATI, Davao Oriental—Freed kidnap victim businessman Efren Dupa yesterday said he did not pay any ransom money in exchange for his liberty.

Dupa was kidnapped by unidentified armed men from the family-owned hardware store on Sunday morning.

"I did not pay any ransom money because in the first place, they did not ask for ransom money from me. All I gave to my captors was my .45 cal. pistol and mobile phone," he said.

Pressed to recount his ordeal in the hands of his captors, Dupa said: "They threatened to kill me. All I could remember was that there were two guns pointed at my head while we boarded the Toyota pickup. They told me that before they would kill me, I should call up my wife first through the mobile phone. But I was not able to contact my wife. So I contacted my brother-in-law, (former North Cotabato Rep. Gregorio) Andolana."

Dupa believes that he was released after he was able to convince his captors that he was a "businessman doing a clean living. I did not wrong anybody. I told them that as a matter of fact, I am helping many poor people in this town."

"I told them that if they were going to kill me, then it is just like killing the source of living of many poor people in this town. Because of that, they freed me," he said.

But Dupa refused to give details of his phone conversation with Andolana.

Senior Insp. Sergio Manigo, town police chief, said Dupa still refused to reveal details of the kidnapping. *Ferdinand O. Zuasola, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

Rebs counter Army claim on leadership vacuum

DAVAO CITY—The New People's Army (NPA) refuted the military claim that it has suffered a leadership vacuum following recent encounters in Compostela Valley.

Rigoberto Sanchez, spokesperson of the NPA's Merardo Arce Command, said in a press statement that there is no truth in the statement of 404th Infantry Brigade commander Col. Rodolfo Obaniana that Eduardo Genelza alias Commander Lando had already left the movement and has become a big-time miner.

Genelza was reportedly the leader of the NPA's Pulang Bagani Command-3.

Obaniana told reporters last week that Genelza has ceased leading his group as he was enriching himself with illegal mining operations and "unremitted" collections of revolutionary taxes in Compostela Valley and its neighboring areas.

"The rebels right now are always on the run as they have a leadership vacuum," he said.

But Sanchez said Genelza and his group have been "most active in carrying out their tasks in the revolution."

"The military is consistently spinning baseless propaganda in the hope of denigrating the impact of the NPA's tactical offensives and the increasing strength of the revolutionary movement," he said.

He also accused the military of misleading the media "by providing them inaccurate, if not outrightly false information. It twists the truth to serve its propaganda and exaggerates its supposed achievements."

He also said there were only two rebels killed and not nine as what the military reported during the encounter in Barangay Napnapan, Pantukan, Compostela Valley on Sept. 22.

Sanchez also said Jordan Donillo alias Jovan was rescued and was not forcibly taken by rebels from the vehicle of the Bureau of Jail Management and Penology on Sept. 30 in Mawab town.

"The AFP claimed that Ka Jovan was forcibly taken by the NPA to stand trial before a revolutionary court supposedly for giving valuable information to the enemy. The truth is his rescue is in line with the policy and practice of the NPA to liberate comrades from the clutches of the fascist AFP torturers and from a reactionary judicial system," he said. *Anthony S. Allada, PDI Mindanao Bureau*

PACIFICADOR FATE HANGS

Antique court to decide today on 18-yr-old Javier slay case

By Nestor P. Burgos Jr.
PDI Visayas Bureau

ILOILO CITY—The long-awaited promulgation of the decision on the 18-year-old murder case of former Antique Gov. Evelio Javier is set today, with both the prosecution and the defense saying they have a strong case.

Judge Rudy Castrojas of the Antique Regional Trial Court Branch 12 will issue the decision at 8:30 a.m. in his *sala*, which is expected to be jampacked with relatives and supporters of the accused and the victims.

Former Assemblyman Arturo Pacificador was charged with masterminding the killing of his political rival on Feb. 11, 1986 while Javier was monitoring the canvassing of results of the snap presidential elections.

Javier was then campaigning for former President Corazon Aquino, who was running against Pacificador's ally, the late dictator Ferdinand Marcos.

Pacificador is charged with the murder of Javier and the multiple frustrated and attempted murder of several others who were caught in the crossfire as gunmen fired at Javier at the public plaza of the capital town of San Jose.

Prosecution witnesses alleged that Pacificador provided food, money and his house for the armed group that killed Javier, which was strongly denied by Pacificador.

Also charged were Pacificador's son Rodolfo, lawyer Avelino Javellana, Eduardo "Boy Muslim" Iran, John Paloy, Vicente Vegafria, Ramon Hortillano, Henry Salaver, Eleazar Idemne, Rolando Bernardino, Oscar Tiauson, Jimmy Punzalan and three unidentified persons known only as alias Akay, Nonoy, Totong and Dolfo.

The younger Pacificador is seeking refugee status in Canada after Canadian courts rejected the Philippine government's petition to have him extradited.

Iran's whereabouts remained unknown even as unconfirmed reports said he was killed or seriously injured in Malaysia two years ago.

He was believed to be the leader of the gunmen who shot and pursued Javier from the grounds of the provincial capitol to a house 250 meters away where he was finished off.

The trial started in 1987 but it was suspended for nearly 10 years after the Supreme Court issued a temporary restraining order in 1989 amid allegations that the presiding judge then was biased for the defense. The SC lifted the order on July 19, 1999.

Castrojas is the fourth judge to handle the case, which involves 10 volumes of basic court records and at least 28 volumes of stenographic notes.

Castrojas had denied bail to all but one of the 18 accused last Jan. 13. Jose Seguerra was allowed to post bail of P300,000.

Castrojas said there was evidence establishing the participation of Pacificador and his co-accused in Javier's murder.

Garcia a no-show at House hearing

By Cynthia D. Balan
Christine O. Avend[illegible]
and Christian V. Esg[illegible]

IS HE sick or just pl[illegible]ck?

Members of the [illegible]efense committee asked [illegible]estion as they expressed disappointment over Maj. Gen. Carlos Garcia's failure to attend yesterday's first public hearing on alleged corrupt activities of some generals in the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The committee chaired by Parañaque City Rep. Roilo Golez wanted to find out how Garcia, who earns no more than P40,000 monthly, amassed his alleged ill-gotten wealth, including an alleged million-dollar bank deposits in the United States.

A military official confirmed that Garcia had withdrawn his P19 million in savings from AFP Savings and Loan Association Inc.

Vice Adm. Ariston de los Reyes, AFP vice chief of staff, disclosed the matter at the Senate national defense committee meeting yesterday morning.

Senate President Pro Tempore Juan Flavier asked De los Reyes whether he had verified newspaper reports that Garcia took out P19 million from AFPSLAI. "Yes, according to the the AFPSLAI management, General Garcia withdrew such amount," he told Flavier.

De Los Reyes said Garcia withdrew the amount "not on one day but in a number of days."

Breathing difficulty

He said he did not ask AFPSLAI officials when Garcia made the withdrawals but surmised that this "must be recent."

At the hearing in the House of Representatives, De los Reyes said he was told by Garcia's sister that the general was admitted to the University of Sto. Tomas Hospital at about 9 p.m. Sunday.

He read to the committee a clinical abstract of Garcia's medical condition which was prepared by his attending physician, Dr. Ivan Villespin.

It said Garcia was admitted because of "difficulty of breathing and apneic episodes."

He was also said to be suffering from "sleep-disordered breathing (obstructive sleep apnea); chronic obstructive lung disease (COPD) in exacerbation and Dyslipidemia."

De los Reyes said he did not know that Garcia was not going to attend the hearing because there was no prior word from the latter about his medical condition.

This prompted legislators to suspect that Garcia was not really ill but was merely trying to avoid the hearing. They also asked the committee to bring in a doctor to interpret the findings in the clinical abstract.

Rep. Robert "Dodot" Jaworski Jr. (Lakas, Pasig) told the committee to stop De los Reyes from reading the one-and-a-half page clinical abstract because he could not understand it.

"For all we know, he is just suffering from the common cold," Jaworski said.

Cover-up

Rep. Juan Miguel "Mikey" Arroyo (Lakas, Pampanga) said he could not understand why and how Garcia suddenly got sick.

"He seemed to be physically fit, then all of a sudden, he's absent," Arroyo remarked.

He noted that the AFP leadership did not exert all efforts to make sure that Garcia would attend the hearing which, according to him, could lead legislators to suspect a cover-up.

House Minority Leader Vincent "Bingbong" Crisologo (KNP, Quezon City) repeatedly asked De los Reyes if he made efforts to check if Garcia was indeed at the UST Hospital.

IN THE KNOW

AFP comptroller's job

The AFP comptroller assists and advises the Chief of Staff on the budgeting, finance, accounting, internal audit and management services of the AFP.

The AFP comptroller, or the Deputy Chief of Staff for Comptrollership, is also called J6, one of the coordinating staff under the AFP General Headquarters.

The comptroller formulates the AFP's budget plans, and helps present budgetary estimates before administrative and legislative bodies.

The comptroller is also in charge of in determining the AFP's budgetary requirements and operating its finances. *PDI Research*

De los Reyes admitted that he did not.

Rep. Jaime Lopez (Lakas, Manila) asked the committee to invite Garcia's doctor to explain the general's illness.

The committee wants to devise legislative measures to prevent large-scale corruption at the AFP comptrollership, a position Garcia held for a long time, and other graft-prone units of the defense and military establishments.

But could Garcia really amass wealth grossly disproportionate to his legitimate income?

Victim

One of his classmates (*mistah*) in Philippine Military Academy Class 1971 yesterday said Garcia could not have gotten away with the loot without the blessing of the different AFP chiefs of staff he had served.

"Let's just say he earned one peso. The chief of staff got three pesos for sure," the *mistah*, who asked not to be named, told the INQUIRER.

The classmate, a ranking official of the Philippine National Police, described Garcia as a "victim of circumstances," owing to the fact that he was unfortunately the lone official now bearing the weight of the government inquiry and public pressure.

"Do you honestly believe that he did those things all by himself?" he asked.

But knowing Garcia, the PNP official said the allegations of corruption did not quite fit his "low-key" personality.

"He's a very good officer, very soft-spoken," he said of the controversial military officer. "I couldn't imagine him now being in the center of a controversy of this magnitude."

"Soft-spoken" as he was, Garcia maintained very good relations with his *mistahs*, proof of which was his *mistahs'* decision to elect him president of PMA '71, the source said.

Bemedalled

It is the most controversial class in PMA history as it includes Sen. Panfilo Lacson, former Sen. Gregorio Honasan, Felix Browner, PNP Director General Edgar Aglipay and Consul General to Los Angeles Marciano Paynor.

The classmate said Garcia's career—before that infamous stint at the AFP comptrollership—was spent mainly in the Army. Garcia used to be the commander of the Army's engineering brigade based in Luzon.

Born on Nov. 18, 1948, Garcia is a bemedalled officer and recognized leader among his peers.

To date, he has 34 awards, decorations and commendations, which include the Award of Comptrollership Badge and three Distinguished Service Stars.

The native of Tayum, Abra, is a graduate of the Engineer Officer Basic Course and Engineer Officer Advance Course and has a Bachelor of Science degree in civil engineering.

He completed the academic requirements for Masters in Business Administration at De La Salle University, and Masters Degree in Resource Planning and Management in International Defense at the Naval Postgraduate School in Monterey, California.

He served in a variety of command staff positions during his more than 30 years in the military.

Garcia went to the United States for schooling in 1975. Upon his return, he was named deputy comptroller of the 51st Engineering Brigade. A year later, he became the brigade's comptroller.

He was named as the Deputy G3 for Organization and Training of the 51st Engineering Brigade in January 1981 and was designated as the assistant chief of staff (G6) of the same brigade in March 1982.

He held this position for almost three years until he went to the Command and General Staff College (CGSC) at Fort Bonifacio to take up the AFP Command and General Staff Regular Course in 1985.

Garcia is married to Clarita Depakakibo of Iloilo City and has three children: Ian Carl, Juan Paolo and Timothy Mark. *With a report from Ray Leyesa, PDI Research*

Ramiscal trip to US blocked

By Armand N. Nocum

THE OMBUDSMAN has asked immigration officials to stop the departure of a former general facing 24 graft cases and 148 counts of estafa.

The Ombudsman's Office of the Special Prosecutor yesterday wrote the Bureau of Immigration, saying former Brig. Gen. Jose S. Ramiscal Jr. should not be allowed to leave for the United States where he is to visit a sick relative.

"We have asked the BI to stop the departure of Ramiscal until he shall have been able to secure permission from other courts," said Special Prosecutor Dennis Villa-Ignacio.

Ramiscal is facing graft charges over an alleged scam in the multibillion-peso Armed Forces of the Philippines-Retirement and Separation Benefits Systems involving the supposed overpricing of lands bought by the AFP-RSBS.

On Friday, the Second Division of the Sandiganbayan gave Ramiscal a travel authority despite objections from the prosecution, which said he was also facing malversation charges amounting to about P336 million in various divisions of the Sandiganbayan.

In his letter to the BI, acting Special Deputy Prosecutor Humphrey Monteroso said Ramiscal was also facing "numerous cases before the (Ombudsman), which are about to be filed against him" involving an alleged P167 million overprice in the purchase of 148 lots.

Charged with Ramiscal with 148 counts of estafa were RSBS executives Meinrado Enrique, Manuel Satuito and Capt. Perfecto Quilicot.

Garcia: $100,000 loans from friends

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Ironically, Garcia's explanation contradicted the statement made by his wife, Clarita, who had said that her husband, as a military general, had received "gratitude money from contractors and suppliers" in the construction of road, bridges and houses for the Armed Forces of the Philippines.

The $100,000 in cash was seized by US customs agents on Dec. 19, 2003 at the San Francisco airport because Juan Paolo Garcia did not declare it.

Rep. Luis Villafuerte (Kampi, Camarines Sur) presented the first letter yesterday at the first public hearing of the House committee on national defense on Garcia, who has been slapped with a six-month preventive suspension for allegedly maintaining huge dollar deposits in the United States.

Adm. Ariston de los Reyes, AFP vice chief of staff, presented the second letter in defense of Garcia, who was unable to attend the hearing.

But Villafuerte, who asked De los Reyes to read Garcia's letter to Abaya, pointed out that the explanations on how the money would be spent did not match.

In the January letter, Villafuerte noted that Garcia said the money was intended as initial down payment for a condo unit that Timothy (Garcia's son) would use while in New York.

In the letter, Garcia said that part of the money would be used for the tuition of Timothy, who would be studying in New York, and expenses for the Garcia family who would be spending Christmas in the United States.

In his letter to Abaya that De los Reyes read, Garcia said the money was intended as payment for the medical examination of his wife, who has a brain ailment.

Garcia also said that part of the $100,000 would be for the medication of his eldest son, who has been diagnosed with hepatitis C, according to Villafuerte, who read Garcia's letter.

Noting the discrepancies, Villafuerte asked De los Reyes "which was which?"

In light of Garcia's claims that the money came from savings and honoraria, Villafuerte urged the AFP to look into Garcia's savings and investments.

"I think one should also look into the history of these investments. Were they made in small amounts, or big amounts?" Villafuerte said.

He noted that Garcia also held concurrent positions in the AFP.

Even while serving as AFP deputy chief of staff for comptrollership (J6), Garcia was also director of AFP Retirement and Separation Benefits System (RSBS), trustee of the AFP Savings and Loan Association Inc.; chair of Monterosa, an RSBS subsidiary; and chair of the Camp Aguinaldo Golf Club.

"How much was he paid for these?" Villafuerte asked.

Because of Garcia's wife claim that her husband received "gratitude money from suppliers and contractors," Villafuerte urged De los Reyes to produce a list of contracts entered into by the military from March 2001 to March 2004 when Garcia was comptroller.

"I think their (Garcias') defense is that the wife cannot testify against her husband, and Mrs. Garcia's affidavit can't be used against General Garcia. But there will always be a paper trail," Villafuerte said.

Clarita reportedly pleaded with the US customs agents that the $100,000 be returned, saying that she had instructed her son Juan Paolo to declare it but that he found it too much of a hassle.

In a statement she gave to US customs agents, she said that she knew the rules and that last Dec. 17, she declared $100,000 upon arrival in the United States and that she had done the same on earlier trips—$200,000 in January, and in 1993 and 1995.

It was reported that the US customs had found that Clarita had brought into the United States $48,000 on May 10, 2002: $100,000 on Dec. 17, 2003; and $204,230 on Jan. 14, 2004. Garcia was said to have brought in $15,000 on Nov. 4, 1993, and $10,400 on Aug. 1, 1995.

Probe reaches AFP chief of staff

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SLAI board, Lopez retorted: "Is he?"

The hearing lost its expected drama when Garcia failed to show up, citing medical reasons.

Abaya also failed to attend the hearing because he was attending a conference in Japan.

Lopez asked Rep. Roilo Golez (Kampi, Parañaque), the committee chair, to invite officials of the AMLC and the AFPSLAI to the next hearing on Wednesday to shed light on the matter.

The AMLC is headed by Gov. Rafael Buenaventura of the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas. Vice Admiral Ariston de los Reyes, AFP vice chief of staff, testified on Abaya's behalf, being the acting chief of staff as well as chief of the AFP Office of Ethical Standards and Public Accountability (Oespa), which handled Garcia's case.

Golez said his committee was able to establish that Garcia had a P7-million savings deposit with AFPSLAI as of 2002, or even before he became the deputy chief of staff for comptrollership (J-6).

Golez asked why the AFP leadership was silent on this matter or was not even aware that there was such an amount which was disproportionate to Garcia's income.

"It is something that can be reasonably detected with diligence," Golez said.

De los Reyes said he was told by an AFPSLAI director that opening the accounts of AFPSLAI depositors was not possible in the absence of a court order.

He said that Oespa did not find sufficient evidence against Garcia because of existing laws on banking.

De los Reyes also said that the AFP did not make any representation with the US government regarding possible customs violations of Garcia's wife and two sons for allegedly bringing $100,000 in undeclared currency into the United States.

During the House hearing, many congressmen attempted several times to directly link Abaya to Garcia's alleged corrupt activities in the AFP.

Trying to establish that Garcia was a protegee of Abaya, House Deputy Minority Leader Vincent "Bingbong" Crisologo repeatedly asked De los Reyes how Garcia got appointed as comptroller or financial adviser of the chief of staff, and how much influence did an AFP chief of staff have on members of the Board of Generals in appointing or rotating members of his J-staff.

De los Reyes failed to answer Crisologo directly, prompting Golez to remind him that he was under oath.

But De los Reyes said it was Abaya who first relayed to him the news about the detention of members of the Garcia family in the United States.

"General Abaya said it was indeed a problem. We consulted with each other about this matter. Notwitstanding the absence of evidence, General Abaya said it would be prudent to take Garcia out of J-6 and move [him] to another office, where funds would not be a concern," De los Reyes said.

Biazon's call

He said Abaya also referred Garcia's case to Oespa for proper action and suspended the general upon the orders of the Office of the Ombudsman.

Amid the uproar over alleged military corruption, Sen. Rodolfo Biazon yesterday called on retired Navy Commodore Rex Robles to tell all he knew about irregularities in the Armed Forces, as well as "name names."

Biazon, a former Armed Forces chief of staff in Corazon Aquino's administration, was reacting to Robles' disclosure the other day that his former colleagues in the military and classmates in the Philippine Military Academy had asked him to shut his mouth.

Press Secretary Ignacio Bunye denied knowledge of a retired general's claim that one of the beneficiaries of funds allegedly amassed by Garcia was a presidential candidate in the May elections.

"I don't have the slightest idea about the details of this allegation," Bunye said in a phone interview.

The retired officer had told the INQUIRER that Garcia had a list of generals, legislators and one presidential candidate who benefited from corruption in the military.

Graft extends to bond paper and paper clips

From page A1

tics) which consumes more than 10,000 reams of bond paper a year. "And we're not yet talking about paper clips."

Cheng said that not only helmets, uniforms and ammunition, but even office supplies were subjected to conversion in which the supplies were converted to their cash equivalent.

"The bond papers and paper clips are included in the yearly allocations of AFP offices. So they are automatically budgeted. Since they are programmed items, officials have to convert them to squeeze out money," he said.

Blank receipts

Cheng explained that the practice involved the collusion of suppliers who issue a "blank receipt" to officials showing that the materials had been delivered. In return, the suppliers would get 20 percent of the amount reflected in the receipts.

Jodaar was a supplier of the military in the '80s and '90s. Frustrated over the corruption attending every bidding, it stopped dealing with the AFP several years ago.

Emboldened by the pledge of Ms Arroyo to clean up the AFP following the Magdalo coup, Jodaar had started dealing with the AFP since last year.

Cartel

On April 4, 2004, it won the bidding for the supply of 97,257 pairs of combat boots worth P102.1 million to the Philippine Army. But like other contracts in the AFP, it was lost in the usual maze of bureaucratic red tape and corruption.

The contract eventually ended up in the hands of some favored suppliers belonging to a "cartel," according to Jodaar.

"The Feliciano Commission had not addressed our grievances," said Cheng, who initially thought that Malacañang was really serious in weeding out bad eggs in the AFP.

"Imagine, our bid price could have saved P17 million for the government which is facing a fiscal crisis," he said. "Does the President know that her orders to eliminate corruption in the military just fell on deaf ears?"

Take the case of the combat boots, one of the grievances aired by Magdalo soldiers during the July 27, 2003 coup attempt.

Cheng said Jodaar won the bidding, but lost the contract due to a highly questionable testing scheme by the AFP Research and Development Center (RDC). (Jodaar emerged as the lowest bidder, having submitted a bid of P993.50 per pair of boots, compared with Filboot Manufacturing Corp.'s P1,047 and Gibson Manufacturing's P1,038.)

Complicity

Cheng later accused the Procurement Service of the Department of Budget and Management (PSDBM), which conducted the bidding on behalf of the AFP, of complicity with certain members of the RDC.

But the questionable award to Filboot later backfired.

PSDBM discovered that Filboot could only deliver 32 percent of the required pairs of boots within the time frame imposed by the AFP, so it eventually bid out the remaining 68 percent (about 47,000 pairs of boots) of the contract.

The allegation of irregularity prompted former Defense Secretary Eduardo Ermita to order an inquiry. A panel from the defense department and the AFP then summoned Jodaar to shed light on the anomalous bidding.

But Cheng was later surprised by the absence of PSDBM officials from the hearing. "They are part of the problem. They are the ones investigated here, not us," he said.

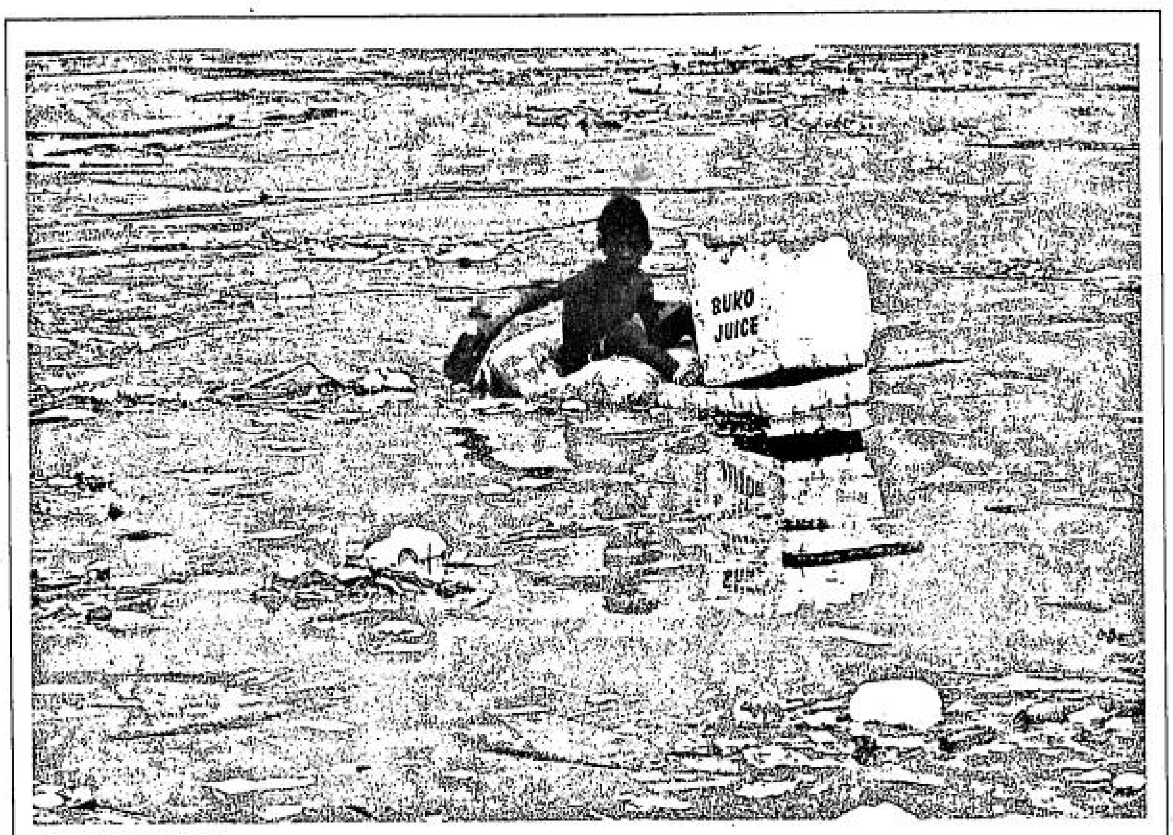
"They did not really conduct the investigation," added Cheng. He said Carolina Hernandez, a member of the Feliciano Commission, was supposed to have also investigated the combat boots controversy.

"Yet not once during the supposed investigation (by the AFP) did they summon the accused party so that we could have a confrontation to find out the truth," the businessman said.

Worse, he said, nothing came of the inquiry. "No findings, no recommendations, no resolution. Nothing has been furnished us.

"That's why members of the association of suppliers of the AFP do not want to speak out. They feel that they are just being used to show that the higher-ups are doing something, but in the end nothing will happen. Those of us who had chosen to speak out against corruption are later blacklisted," he said.

Veggie trucks test Metro food lanes



GONE FISHING EDWIN BACASMAS

A boy rows an improvised raft in the murky waters of Manila Bay hoping to find someone else's garbage that he can sell to the junk man.

By Vincent Cabreza

LA TRINIDAD, Benguet—Thirty trucks carrying 1,650 tons of Metro Manila's vegetable supply left Benguet for Divisoria yesterday to test the viability of the food lanes laid out by Agriculture Secretary Arthur Yap along the North Luzon and Southern Luzon expressways in coordination with the Metro Manila Development Authority.

Mayor Nestor Fongwan said the food lanes would reduce farmers' shipping burdens and provide them a clear advantage should government finalize a trade agreement with China next year.

Metropolitan Manila Development Authority Chair Bayani Fernando agreed to open food lanes conditioned on a guarantee that a free flow of Benguet vegetables would not obstruct traffic or increase Metro Manila's waste, said Ricardo Cachuela, executive director of the Department of Agriculture's Post-harvest Research and Extension Bureau.

"Vegetable truckers skirted the expressway truck ban by transferring their load to smaller trucks, which increased the volume of vehicles entering Manila. The food lane reduces this volume to an average of 400 food trucks each day," he added.

Fongwan and Benguet officials announced that they had withdrawn their opposition to a pending early harvest program (EHP) between the Philippines and China, now that the Arroyo government was pursuing measures to strengthen the competitiveness of the vegetable industry.

The EHP is a bilateral trade agreement that frees selected items from each country's tariffs, according to Ambassador Donald Dee, presidential envoy on international trade relations.

But what President Macapagal-Arroyo really expects from an efficient expressway food lane is the reduction of food prices by the end of the quarter, said Cachuela. "By assuring the free flow of food through the expressway, and by reducing their formal and informal highway fees by P1,000 per truck, the food lanes assure farmers daily savings that will benefit them and will encourage an increase in production," Cachuela said.

Metro Manila remains the major market for vegetables, but it gets 98 percent of its supplies from Benguet and Mt. Province, he added.

Combined with the roll-off-roll-on barges for short inter-island shipping, the government will have institutionalized a food chain system to guarantee an abundant food supply from domestic sources for Metro Manila.

"This system encourages a more equitable economic transaction between farmers and their markets," Cachuela said. "The trading posts have not been efficient because farmers still rely on middlemen to sell their produce. But with a more efficient food shipping network), farmers have better opportunities to deal with their real buyers."

5 rob suspects shot dead

By Tina G. Santos

FIVE suspected members of two kidnap-for-ransom and robbery groups were killed after they shot it out with operatives of the Criminal Investigation Unit (CIU) and Special Weapons and Tactics (SWAT) unit of the Central Police District in Quezon City early yesterday morning.

The suspects, alleged members of the Sudoy-sudoy, Waray-Waray and Abuyog gangs, had apparently joined forces, said Supt. Procopio Lipana, chief of CPD-CIU.

Lipana identified four of the five dead suspects as Aladin Malinao, Jesus Mendez, Nicholas Gonzaga and Cpl. Pelagio Royera, reportedly a member of the Philippine Army.

Malinao, Mendez and Gonzaga were initially verified to be those who recently escaped from the custody of the Malolos Provincial Jail personnel along the stretch of the North Expressway.

The three were on their way back to the province from a court hearing in Quezon City on Sept. 28.

The suspects had opened fire at the lawmen during a raid at an apartment inside the Ramos Compound, Philand Extension, Pasong Tamo, Tandang Sora, around 5 a.m.

Police said they tried to serve a warrant of arrest against the group who resisted and fired at the authorities, prompting the law enforcers to retaliate.

Another suspect, Michael Turion, who was arrested earlier, was caught while leaving the apartment.

Raps filed vs 4 Manila execs

By Tarra V. Quismundo

THE MANILA City government has filed administrative charges against its own officials who had a hand in the construction of the ill-fated Sai Building, an eight-story structure that collapsed more than two months ago because of faulty construction.

Last week, Secretary to the Mayor Emmanuel Sison and the City Legal Office filed charges of neglect of duty against four officials of the City Engineer's Office involved in the site inspection and approval of permits that paved the way for the building's construction in 1998, and its use and occupation in 1999. Charged were Rolito Simon, Lirma Faja, Wilson Habaña and Edgardo Soriano, head of the Manila Building Office Enforcement Division who signed the building's Certificate of Final Inspection and the Certificate of Occupancy.

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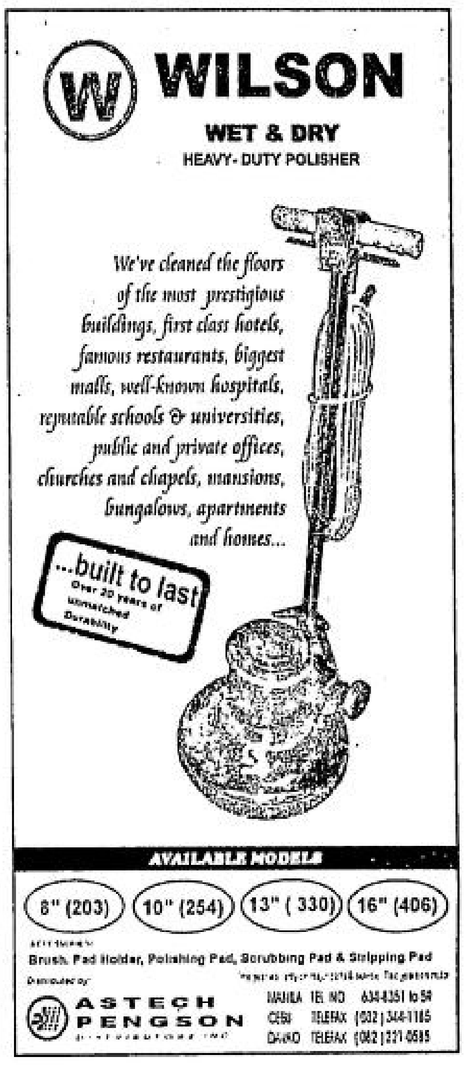

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Matillano should not be an exception

ON TARGET

Ramon Tulfo

AFTER more than two weeks of a restful and problem-free vacation, I'm face to face with a female domestic help who was badly battered by her employer.

Zenaida Latuga is 29 years old (born on Feb. 12, 1975) but she looks like she's much older, worn out apparently due to overwork and constant beatings from her employer.

Her lips are swollen, her eyes bloodshot, her face bruised all over. Her front teeth are all gone. She has a gaping wound on her right foot, her right shin is bruised. Her toenail is gone and her left foot has a big scar.

Zenaida, who's from Sorsogon, said she was beaten up with a chopping board by Emilyn Gandon, an employee at the Mandaluyong City Hall.

Every time she could not follow instructions, Gandon would hit her in any part of the body with anything she could get hold of: a stick, a chopping board, a dumbbell, a pair of pliers.

She has been with the Gandon household for 12 years. She endured all the beatings she got from Emilyn Gandon. But last Friday was the proverbial last straw. She ran away from her employer and sought refuge in a family that took pity on her.

Aida Oraye, 48, who brought Zenaida to my "Isumbong mo kay Tulfo" office yesterday, said she chanced upon the battered woman walking aimlessly. Oraye took Zenaida home.

Zenaida seemed unwilling to talk at first about her ordeal. On Oraye's proddings, she opened up.

Zenaida is not alone in her predicament. She is an example of how some households maltreat their domestic help.

I know that Cagayan Rep. Jack Enrile will again be boiling mad when he reads this as he did the last time this space reported about the maltreatment of Sonia Bernardino by her *amo*.

***

Giving food coupons to the poor will not solve their hunger problem.

The government will only make the poor dependent on it for their sustenance.

People should work for their food. Even the Bible says so.

It's not the job of government to feed the poor. Even in welfare states, the government gives paychecks to the unemployed but not food.

The task of helping the poor eat should be left to charitable and religious organizations.

After all, giving food to the hungry is part of Christian teachings.

The clergy should share their excess food with the poor members of their church.

***

I'm surprised why Director General Edgar Aglipay is defending Director Eduardo Matillano, the problem-plagued police general, from accusations that the latter is using a confiscated luxury sports car.

Aglipay says it was all right for Matillano to do that since it was his former unit, the Criminal Investigation and Detection Group (CIDG), that took custody of the car whose owner was a suspected drug lord.

Yes, it's okay for Matillano to take custody of the car so he can present it as evidence in court. But he should not be driving it around.

Some police officials have been kicked out of the service for appropriating stolen vehicles for their personal use.

Why should Matillano be an exception?

Prayer room to rise in San Juan mall

From page A16

residents were not consulted about the plan.

Calling the move the first step of an "economic *hara-kiri*," the group said that based on historical experience, "wherever mosques are built in non-Muslim areas, the place quickly deteriorates."

"For the past 30 years or more, we have invested in our homes," it added "...Without question, such a mosque will bring property values down and will trigger an outward migration of long time residents—their homes to be taken over by others who only have trade and profit in their minds."

Not all Greenhills residents share the Federation's views.

Francisco Joaquin Sr., former chair and president of North Greenhills Association, said the Federation's letter "smacks of bigotry and religious intolerance... and seems to condemn all Muslim as thieves, crooks and troublemakers."

Marites Guingona-Africa, founder and executive director of The Peacemakers' Circle Foundation also appealed to the residents to "transcend our fears."

In a letter sent Oct. 7 to the Federation, Africa urged the group "to look beyond ourselves, and see the bigger picture, (which is) our country and its well-being... so that we can live dignified lives in the spirit of mutual respect, good will and cooperation."

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MUSLIM 'MUSSALAH' IN GREENHILLS

Prayer room to rise in San Juan mall

By Luige A. del Puerto

DESPITE the opposition of rich residents in the area, the company that operates the Greenhills Shopping Center in San Juan stands by its decision to build a prayer room for Muslim traders at the heart of the commercial complex.

The move has the full backing of Mayor Joseph Victor "JV" Ejercito.

By November, Ortigas & Company plans to open the prayer room in front of Club Filipino and OB Montessori school, on the ground floor of a four-story parking area now being built in the shopping center, according to its chief operating officer, Rex Drilon.

While plans for its construction were reported three months ago, concerned homeowners had been alarmed about the move.

The firm insists on calling the would-be 400-square-meter area a "prayer room" or *mussalah*—not a mosque, a building that usually stands alone and is recognized by a dome-type ceiling adorned by the crescent moon.

Drilon said the prayer room is nothing new. The Muslim traders, estimated at 500, were provided a prayer area since 1994 at a dimly-lit alley between the Unimart and the Virra Mall buildings.

The company, however, found the area unfit for prayer as it is unkempt and affords little privacy to those who pray, with the regular customer traffic. "Muslims pray five times a day, and they do need a place to pray," the firm said in its response to opposition mounted by residents in surrounding areas.

Ejercito said he has heard complaints, but has no objections to the project. "I personally commend the initiative and efforts of Ortigas & Company in giving importance to the spiritual development of its tenants and customers," he said in a statement yesterday.

At the same time, he said he would like to listen to the concerns and fears of the residents because of recent reports that tended to cast doubts on the Muslim character in general. "A continuous dialogue is necessary to erase some biases and find workable compromises," he added.

"Some Greenhills residents may consider the issue involved (in denying the Muslims a place of worship) to be merely 'economic and the preservation of their way of life, not religious'," he said. "However, to the Muslims this denial of their place of worship is a religious issue," Ejercito said.

The mayor also assured residents of their security, saying that building the *mussalah* would be "beneficial rather than risky."

Ortigas & Company had, in fact, built a Catholic chapel—the equivalent of a mosque—in Greenhills last year, costing the firm around P15 million. The Muslim prayer center, on the other hand, would amount to half that sum, Drilon said. Ortigas also allowed Jesus is Lord, a charismatic Christian group, to use the Music Museum as a place of worship on Sundays, he added.

Opposition to the prayer room came from the The Federation of Greenhills Association of San Juan. The INQUIRER was furnished a copy of its letter to Ortigas & Company signed by the chair and presidents of Northeast Greenhills, North Greenhills and West Greenhills, arguing that the "stand and feelings" of

PRAYER ROOM/ A15

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41 sports but only 388 golds

By Marc Anthony Reyes

THERE will be 41 sports but only 388 gold medals will be at stake in the 2005 Philippine Southeast Asian Games.

The new roster of sports and their events—finalized by the SEA Games Federation executive council last night after a marathon meeting at the New World Hotel—will be presented for approval by the SEAG Federation general assembly today.

In terms of events to be disputed, next year's SEAG will be the smallest since the 1999 edition in Brunei, where only 22 sports were played due to limited facilities.

Philippine Olympic Committee and SEAG Federation president Celso Dayrit said two major considerations were behind the decision to add more sports.

DAYRIT: Savings

Limiting the events will unburden the host country from spending for a "bloated program," while adding more sports gives the SEAG countries a chance to further help their respective buildups for either the Asian Games or the Olympics, Dayrit added.

From the original 34 sports decided during the first federation meeting, the council added six sports with drastically reduced events—weightlifting (eight golds), lawn tennis (4), squash (2), lawn bowls (4), bodybuilding (4) and muay thai (4).

Dragonboat racing was removed as a rowing event and installed as the 41st sport in the calendar.

Malaysia, Thailand foot the bill

Malaysia also offered to shoulder the expenses for holding the squash and lawn bowls competition with Thailand doing the same in the case of muay thai.

"This is a very manageable SEA Games," said Dayrit, adding that the country can save a lot by holding fewer events on a budget of P1 billion.

Vietnam hosted 34 events in 2003, but with 450 golds at stake. In Malaysia in 2001, there were 420 golds staked in 32 sports, while Indonesia in 1997 put up 490 golds in 36 sports.

However, Dayrit said he still can't make any prediction as to how the country would fare in the overall medal race.

President's exhortation

The country came within a gold of winning the overall title when it last hosted the Games in 1989 and no less than President Macapagal-Arroyo had asked sports officials to go for the crown this time.

The council said powerlifting, soft tennis, wall climbing and ice skating didn't make it to the final roster because they are still not recognized by the SEAG Federation. However, wall climbing just might make it as a demonstration sport.

The council decided to prune down the number of golds in the country's bailiwick event of dancesports from 10 to two gold medals, and triathlon from eight to two.

Meanwhile, Thailand was picked to host the 2007 SEAG and Laos the 2009 edition. It would be the Thais' sixth hosting, while the Laotians will become a first-time host like Vietnam in 2003.

SEA Games members solid behind 2005 hosts

By Jasmine W. Payo

THE SOUTHEAST Asian Games Federation delegates have expressed confidence that the Philippines can successfully host the 23rd SEA Games slated in November next year.

"The delegates are very supportive and understanding of the constraints the Filipino organizing committee is going through. And we are the last people who want to put any demands on the host nation," said Prince Imran, honorary president of the Southeast Asian Games Federation and president of the Olympic Commit-

SEA GAMES/ A18

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DAYS TO GO

Gonzalez denies favorable decision on Asi & Co.

By Philip C. Tubeza

JUSTICE Secretary Raul Gonzalez yesterday denied reports that the Department of Justice was set to declare that the eight so-called "Fil-sham" cagers in the Philippine Basketball Association are Filipino citizens.

Gonzalez said the committee report quoted in the story that came out in the INQUIRER on Saturday was drafted by a special committee formed by his predecessor and not by the panel he recently created to investigate and finally decide on the citizenship of the eight PBA stars.

"The leakeage was an attempt to preempt the official resolution which I will release in two to three days," Gonzalez said.

"It's very embarrassing to my office. I have received so many calls even from congressmen and senators."

Gonzalez said the special committee had been disbanded when he took over the DOJ last month and was replaced by the investigating panel. He said he has ordered an investigation as to who leaked the special commitee's draft recommendation.

Gonzalez noted that the story that came out Saturday also qouted only "some portions" of the draft recommendation.

The special panel had concluded that the documents submitted to the DOJ were "enough" to recognize the eight as Filipinos.

Under investigation are Talk 'N Text's Asi Taulava, the PBA's most valuable player last season, as well as Davonn Harp, Jon Ordonio and Mick Pennisi of Red Bull, Rudy Hatfield of Coca-Cola, Andy Seigle and Alex Crisano of Barangay Ginebra and Dorian Peña of San Miguel Beer.

Gonzalez said the DOJ was still studying whether to tackle Taulava's case since he had secured an injunction from the Manila Regional Trial Court.

He said the DOJ resolution would deal only with cagers and not their managers and other PBA officials who might have been involved in allegedly faking their citizenship papers.

"These people might be the real culprits and the players were just victims. We are studying this very carefully," Gonzalez said.

He said the cagers found to be non-Filipinos would be deported. He said they could apply for naturalization but this would be difficult for those who forged their papers.

"They will have to be expelled by deportation," he said.

The Senate Committee on Games, Amusement and Sports in August 2003 had ordered the Bureau of Immigration to deport Taulava and the other players for faking their citizenship.

But the DOJ has to first revoke its confirmation of their citizenship before the BI could deport them.

The Senate committee, chaired by former senator Robert Barbers, said the documents submitted by the cagers were fake, except those of Seigle.

Red Bull, Shell eye first win

COKE's Jeffrey Cariaso and Purefoods' Paul Artadi pounce on the loose ball.

AUGUST DELA CRUZ

RED BULL tries to get going again in the Gran Matador PBA Philippine Cup when the Thunder collide with the Shell Turbochargers today at the Xavier Gym in Cagayan de Oro City.

Even after being humbled by underdog FedEx Friday, Red Bull goes into its 6 p.m. clash with Shell as the logical favorite.

Red Bull lacked focus and showed little fire as they trailed the FedEx by as many as 20 points.

But coach Yeng Guiao is expected to come up with some adjustments today and maximize the potential of his team which became even more formidable with the arrival of Vergel Meneses.

Meneses had 15 points in a respectable debut. But it was evident there was no leader on the floor for Red Bull, with Jimwell Torion serving the first of a three-game suspension, slapped for rough play in the Fiesta Conference.

Shell is also coming off a loss, but the Turbochargers were not in the same listless state as the Thunder were last week.

The Turbochargers lost steam after a strong start in bowing to Coca-Cola, leading by as many as 15 points in one stretch with a lineup that has no superstar or take-charge guy.

Red Bull's advantage will be its men in the frontcourt, the exact weakness of Shell, which tried desperately to land a big man in the off-season.

Chris Jackson continues to be the heart and soul of Shell and he will have to work double time underneath. *Musong R. Castillo*

Rivera, King bowl perfect 300 in Jakarta

PHILIPPINE bowling team members Biboy Rivera and Chester King both shot a perfect 300 game to barge into the masters finals of the 2nd Indonesian International Open at the Jaya Ancol Bowling Center in Jakarta.

Rivera, a gold medalist like King in the 2001 SEA Games in Malaysia, shot the first perfect game in the 15-country, 400-player tournament in the doubles event. King shot the second 300 in the Masters qualifying event.

The duo shared the prize money of 5,000,000 rupiah (P31,000) for their feat.

Rivera and King will bowl in the masters finals today and tomorrow.

Also making it to the masters competitions are fellow RP team members Liza del Rosario, Irene Garcia Benitez, Jojo Cañare, Tyrone Ongpauco and Joone Gatchalian.

The top 16 men and women in the masters finals will advance to the Indonesia leg of the ABF Tour, the world's biggest amateur bowling tour.

SEA Games members . . .

From page A17

tee of Malaysia.

Imran, one of the 33 delegates who arrived for the two-day SEAGF conference, added that all the other 10-member nations were willing to compromise and work on a limited budget.

"I think we've been very fair to the host nation in that regard. We tried not to go for tremendously expensive sports. By cutting down a lot of events in some sports, the number of athletes will also be cut down," he said.

Imran added: "We agreed that if the stadium needs to be shared by two or three sports, then why not? If we need to start a couple of days earlier in a particular sport, then by all means do so in order to bring the cost down."

Imran also said that from the start, the member nations were not expecting the Philippines to host a grand event.

"You must remember this is not the Olympic Games, this is not the Asian Games. This is not the highest international standard. What's important is we meet the standard of the Southeast Asian nations. We're not necessarily expecting more than that," he said.

The Philippines has set a P1 billion budget for staging the SEAG, with most of the expenses going to the refurbishing of facilities and purchase of modern equipment and timing devices.

Other delegates also commended the Philippine committee for its preparations.

"The work has been very productive. It is very well organized. We're relatively new in the Games but I'm very pleased with the atmosphere," observed Joao Viegas Carrascalao whose country, Timor-Leste, is participating only for the second time.

Timbul Thomas Lubis of Indonesia was similarly satisfied. "Everything is okay. It seems to me everything is on track. The delegates are very cooperative in general," he noted.

Meas Sarin of Cambodia added: "There were discussions, but we were able to get a balance. We are satisfied," he said.

"I believe Manila can pull this through. I think no one had any doubt," Imran said.

Yakult 10 Miler stakes P180,000

A PRIZE pot of P180,000 is at stake when the Yakult 10 Miler holds its 16th edition on Nov. 7 at the Cultural Center of the Philippines grounds.

Michael Ong, Yakult Phils. Inc assistant manager for sales and planning, said the top male and female winners of the centerpiece event will receive P7,000 plus trophies. The runners-up will pocket 3,000 plus trophies, while third to fifth placers will get P2,000, P1,000 and P500, respectively, plus medals

In the 5K fun run and 3K kiddie run, medals will be awarded to the top three finishers plus Yakult gift packs.

The 10 Miler as well as the 5K fun run are open to children 6 to 13 years old. There will be two age divisions in the 3K run—the one for kids 6 to 9 years and the other for kids 10 to 13 years.

Registration fee is P100.

Over 2,000 runners competed in last year's event won by Rodolfo Tacadino of the Philippine Army and Hazel Madamba of the Navy.

SPORTSWATCH

Bumgarner, Stockinger halt Guidicelli

BUMGARNER

DEFENDING champion Michelle Bumgarner of M&M Racing and Marlon Stockinger of Birel-Fila dominated their respective races Sunday at the Boom Na Boom Kart Trak inside the CCP Complex to foil the double victory bid of Matteo Guidicelli in the 2004 PCSO Shell Superkarting Series. The stage was actually set for Guidicelli's day after he ruled both the Open Class and the Formula Rotax Max Juniors in the pre-final heat of this event sponsored by Pilipinas Shell, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Comglasco Aguila Glass, Bridgestone, Aviva Insurance, Eastway Motorcycle Racing and Denso Iridium Power. But Bumgarner and Stockinger performed stronger in the final races at the tight and tricky 650-meter kart track. Bumgarner, who owns the record laptime of 30.028 seconds, seized the lead from Guidicelli in the sixth lap and held on to top the 26-lap lap race in 18:09.181. She was a mere 0.423 second faster than Guidicelli, who admitted putting safety concerns ahead of his desire to win. Allan Uy of Team Alessandra-PCR checked in third while Mark Bumgarner wound up fourth. In the Rotax Max Juniors, Stockinger grabbed the lead from Guidicelli in the third lap and broke away in the 12th on a Guidicelli error. Stockinger clocked 14:21.183 to grab the lead in the class. Mark Bumgarner and Marty Aguilar of Bosch-Intelco followed Stockinger and Guidicelli in that order. Despite the setbacks, however, Guidicelli remained on top of the title race for the Open Class and the coveted Karter of the Year awards.

Gabi decisions tough Thai fighter

WORLD Boxing Council No. 8 flyweight Diosdado "Prince" Gabi outclassed Thai Sairung Pathavikorn-Gym in their 10-round clash Sunday topbilling the Vendetta card in Antipas, North Cotabato. Gabi pressed the attack all night with wicked body shots to win by unanimous decision and delight the crowd led by Antipas Mayor Cris Cadungon in the town's municipal gym. The win improved the southpaw Gabi's record to 23-2-1 (17 KOs). World Boxing Organization vice president for Asia Pacific Leon Panoncillo said he would recommend a Top 10 ranking for Gabi and a possible bout with WBO flyweight champ Omar Narvaez of Argentina. "He should be fighting for the WBO title down the line," Panoncillo said yesterday. Gabi's manager, Socrates Piñol, expressed satisfaction over his ward's performance, but credited the Thai for his durability and experience in avoiding a knockout defeat. "The Thai was also tough and very dangerous. There was a power blackout in the middle of the fight, and that gave the Thai time to recuperate. Gabi could have knocked him out," Piñol said. North Cotabato Gov. Emmanuel Piñol announced that Gabi would most likely fight in the undercard of the Manny Pacquiao-Gairy St. Claire duel on Dec. 4 in Taguig. *Salven L. Lagumbay*

Santillan gains in latest WBC ratings

ORIENTAL and Pacific Boxing Federation welterweight champ Rev Santillan gained most among three Filipino boxers who moved up in the ratings of the World Boxing Council during its 42nd convention last Friday in Phuket, Thailand. Games and Amusements Board boxing chief Emmanuel Flores said the Cebu-based Santillan will be ranked No. 4 from No. 8 when the WBC releases its ratings soon. Santillan parades a record of 21 wins, 1 loss, 1 draw with 15 KOs. OPBF lightweight champ Dennis Laurente was also elevated to No. 7 from No. 12. Laurente (21-1-4) defended his title with a majority decision win over Japanese Chikashi Inada on Oct. 2 in Tokyo. Another OPBF champ, minimumweight kingpin Rodel Mayol, was assured by no less than WBC president Jose Sulaiman of the No. 1 ranking in December. The Mandaue City-based Mayol (19-0, with 15 KOs) is ranked No. 2. Other Filipino boxers rated highly are No. 2 super featherweight Randy Suico, No. 3 super fly Malcolm Tuñacao, No. 8 fly Diosdado Gabi, No. 3 junior fly Juanito Rubillar, No. 3 minimumweight Eriberto Gejon and No. 9 Armand Dela Cruz. *Salven L. Lagumbay*

Arevalo, Guittap gain Vigan tennis finals

VIGAN—Patrick Arevalo thumped Mark Gregory Abelardo, 6-0, 6-0, in the boys' 14-under division to lead the finalists in the North Luzon qualifier of the 2004 Milo Junior Tennis Cup at the Vigan Tennis Club here. Arevalo arranged a titular showdown with Lendell Chua, who ousted Mars Guancho-Manzanas, 6-1, 6-1. Kim Marie Guittap downed Mara Medina, 6-4, 6-1, to advance in the girls' 12-under class against JV Custodio in the tournament organized by CTW and supported by adidas and Malaysia Airlines. Other finalists include Rafael Medina and Ericka Denise Lagura in the unisex 10-under, as well as Margaux Ysabel Abaya and Mara Medina in the girls' 14-under bracket. In the boys' 12-under event, Joshua Manzanas routed Eleazar Arevalo, 6-1, 6-4, and will meet Stephen Dave Chua for a berth in the National Finals next month in Manila where berths in Malaysian tournaments are at stake.

Championship Day caps Philtobo race carnival

LOCAL horse racing's championship season starts on Oct. 17 when the Philippine Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders' Organization (Philtobo) unveils its 5th Grand Championship Day at the Santa Ana Park.

A racing extravaganza headlined by six top divisional events featuring the land's best gallopers, Championship Day caps a week-long carnival of special races designed to promote the breeding and racing of quality thoroughbreds and enhance the level of track competition.

"Championship Day is at the center of Philtobo's year-round program to promote the local thoroughbred industry, starting off with the Horse Show in November of the previous year, the Championship Races in October and the Gintong Lahi Awards in January of the following year," said Philtobo president Bienvenido C. Niles Jr.

Major sponsors of the 5th Philtobo Grand Championship Day include the Philippine Racing Commission, Philippine Charity Sweepstakes Office, Philippine Racing Club Inc., Motolite Phils., Herma Farms and Stud, Magic Millions Ltd. Australia and Unilever Phils.

Also lending their support are EEG Farms, Ranchito San Gabriel, Papiroman Farm, Rolling Green Farm and Money Tree Farm.

The featured races are the Mitra Cup Futurity Championship races for 2-year-old colts and fillies, the 3-year-old Colts and 3-year-old Fillies' Championships, the Philtobo Classic for older horses and the Philtobo Open for both local and foreign-bred campaigners.

Only yearling graduates of Philtobo's 2003 Horse Show are eligible to compete in the Mitra Cup Futurity Championship Races for 2-year-olds, a brainchild of Philtobo's founding chair, the late Speaker Ramon V. Mitra, in whose honor the race is held.

All six featured races carry a total pot of P500,000 each, with the winner receiving P300,000. The other prizes are P125,000, P50,000 and P25,000 from second to fourth, respectively.

Weeding, walking

SPECTATOR

Al S. Mendoza

JUST a reminder, fellas: Valentin "VD" Dakuykoy, my legman, is still very much around. Yesterday, he had a surprise for me. Or so he thought. He said gardening has become his hobby.

"It's a good exercise, Sir," he said.

And I said to him, "You mean, it's only now that you've come to know about gardening's health benefits?"

You tend to your garden every day, before you go to office or after coming from work if the sun's still up, and that will make you fit as an ox the whole year round. For variety, walk 30 minutes when not gardening. Both vocations are good for the heart, muscles and the mind.

Take it from me. I've been at it for sometime now.

See, the "other half" now spends most of her time tending to her garden, planted mostly now to mustard, corn, papaya, calamansi, tomato and okra. Seedlings of green peppers have just been planted. They've been properly marked with sticks cut from avocado twigs; I did that myself. A good exercise, I must say.

The past few days, the neighbors had the surprise of their lives when they received robust mustard leaves bundled in baskets made of bamboos. Gifts from the "other half." Writer Sylvia Mayuga had been a recipient—on her birthday, Oct. 9, which was John Lennon's birthday, too. Had he been alive, John Lennon (murdered in 1980) would have turned 64.

Nobody ever thought it could be done. How can backyard gardening survive in the city known for smoke and choking air?

VD said to one and all: "Listen always to John Lennon's Across the Universe and your trust to good living will never diminish."

I can believe that as much I can believe in the benefits of gardening and walking.

Listen to Volvo Magazine: GET FIT GARDENING. Green-fingered readers will now be nodding sagely (or should that read 'smugly'?) having already experienced the many fitness benefits of gardening. Researchers have found that you can reap almost the same health benefits from gardening as you would from a workout at the gym.

Gardening has been credited with stimulating the mind (learning about plants and flowers), reducing stress (natural beauty can lift your mood), and boosting mental health (offering the opportunity for self-expression).

"Depending on the activity, gardening can be as tough a workout as sports such as kayaking or weightlifting," says Melicia Whitt, from the University of Pennsylvania.

But remember to warm up before "hitting the weeding"—office-bound enthusiasts have been known to overdo it during weekends.

You have been warned.

"Thanks for the tip, Sir," said VD. "From hereon, weekends should be spent more on weightlifting than weeding."

What's that supposed to mean, VD?

"Weightlifting, Sir, as in lifting glasses and bottles," VD said. "Like gardening and walking, I also find lifting uplifting to the spirit."

Dig that weed if you can't walk. It will do you wonders no doctor can ever prescribe.

***

OK, since we are into health tips, here's an interesting one from Rob Dix of Chicks Unlimited, whose sign in his office reads: "TO VISITORS: Cigarette smoke is the residue of your pleasure. It permeates the air and putrefies my hair and clothes, not to mention that it puts my lungs in danger. This takes place without my consent. I have a pleasure, too. I like San Miguel Beer. Now and again, the residue of my pleasure is urine. Would you be annoyed if I stood on a chair and pissed on your hair and clothes without your consent?"

***

FASTBREAK. Congratulations to Dustin Esguerra, on board a Suzuki Shogun R 125, for winning the first leg of the National Racing Association Castrol Underbone GP 125 Championship at the Carmona Circuit in Cavite. Celine Flores of Lexington International also extends her felicitations to Dustin.

Unstoppable Aguilar rules Bacolod S'cross

Standings after two legs: 1. G. Aguilar 100 points; 2-3 J. Saulog, B. de la Cruz 84; 4. K. San Andres 72; 5. J. Beech 60; 6. 6. A. Beech 58; 7. J. Garcia 31; 8. D. Acdol 29; 9. K. Poculan 26; 10. D. Vilaruz 13.

BACOLOD CITY—Victory in the 2004 Camel Supercross Championship Series is getting to be a habit for FIM-Asian Supercross champion Glen Aguilar.

Veritably unstoppable in his new KTM 250 bike, Aguilar swept all four races in the Pro 125 and Pro Open categories to emerge as the winningest rider again in the second leg of the three-part series sponsored by Camel Filters and held in conjunction with the annual Masskara celebrations here.

Nicknamed "Revtex Rocket," Aguilar came up with another spectacular performance to the delight of a big weekend crowd.

"It feels good winning here again," said Aguilar, who is best remembered for winning the last Camel-sponsored race here six years ago.

Aguilar also swept the kickoff leg of the Camel Supercross held in Roxas City last Sept. 20.

More importantly, Aguilar and Caltex teammate Bebet de la Cruz earned the right to represent the country as lead riders of the RP-Camel Supercross Team in the FIM-Asia Supercross Championship in Macau later this month.

Camel Filters manager Adolfo Lim, Camel dealer Jonapril Lim and Namssa president Ken Falco handed out the trophies to the winners.

Other winners: Saulog (Veterans A); Darby Villaruz (Veterans B), Dexter Bacaba (Executive), Balleza (Power Enduro), Barrido (Novice 125), Judy Bacabac (Enduro), Michael Desbaro (Beginner Enduro), Franklin Gutierrez (Scooter Underbone) and Tim Gado (Pantra).

Crocker sinks mark

REUTERS

IAN CROCKER reacts after setting a world record in the 50-m butterfly.

INDIANAPOLIS—Ian Crocker set a world record in the 50-meter butterfly and the United States avenged an earlier loss to Australia with a victory in the women's 400 freestyle relay at the Short Course World Championships on Sunday night.

The Americans won two of five finals, giving them 16 victories in 28 events so far. The meet ends Monday.

Crocker touched first in 22.71 seconds, lowering the old mark of 22.74 by Geoff Huegill of Australia at the 2002 championships in Berlin. It was the American's second gold medal in the 25-m temporary pool.

Brooke Hanson of Australia won the 100 breaststroke and 200 individual medley, tying the record for most golds at a short course with five. *AP*

Stolz cops first title

LAS VEGAS, Nevada—Australia's Andre Stolz won his first career PGA Tour tournament on Sunday firing a bogey-free five-under-par 67 to capture the $4-million Michelin Championship.

Stolz picked up $720,000 and earned a two-year exemption in just his 21st start on the tour.

His total of 21-under 266 was one shot ahead of Tag Ridings, Harrison Frazar and Tom Lehman. Stolz's best finish this season was a tie for 34th at the HP Classic and he came in ranked 217th on the money list with $88,373—nowhere near the top 125, who receive one-year exemptions. *AFP*

Neumann tops Asahi Open

NORTH AUGUSTA, South Carolina—Liselotte Neumann won her first LPGA Tour title in six years, holding off a late charge by Grace Park for a three-stroke victory at the LPGA Asahi Ryokuken International Championship on Sunday.

Neumann, the 1988 US Women's Open champion, had come into the week with few expectations. But with a final-round 68 and a 15-under 273 total, she won for the first time since 1998. Park also closed with a 68. *AP*

Toyota Otis five boosts stock

WITH KEY reinforcements, Toyota Otis-Letran now looks like a title contender in the Philippine Basketball League Open championship scheduled to start Oct. 23.

The towering Mark Andaya and spitfire John Paul Andaya have given the Intramuros-based squad more offensive options and coach Louie Alas tapped Mark Macapagal, the former San Sebastian hotshot, to provide leadership for the Knights in their bid to be at par with league giants Magnolia-FEU and Welcoat Paints.

"My lineup is much better than my previous squad but we have to work harder this time," said Alas.

Alas is hoping the Knights can leave the ugly memory of their failed NCAA title-retention bid behind.

The Knights appeared ready and capable of retaining their NCAA crown after finishing a surprising third in the Unity Cup.

The Knights are fortunate to have a generous patron in Toyota Otis, headed by Rey Oben and Gil Angeles.

Aside from the 6-foot-7 Mark Andaya, Alas has 6-5 Jonathan Pinera and Dennis Daa, 6-4 Efren Valdez and defensive specialist Eric Rodriguez.

greenwich

GIRLS VOLLEYBALL INVITATIONAL TOURNAMENT

TEAM STANDINGS

(as of October 10, 2004)

GROUP A	W	L	GROUP B	W	L
Colegio San Agustin	3	0	ICA - Dasmarinas	3	0
Rizal High School	2	1	OB Montessori Las Pinas	2	0
OB Montessori Greenhills	1	1	JASMS	2	0
Diliman Preparatory	1	1	Olivarez College	2	2
St. Francis School	1	0	St. Mary's Academy Pasay	1	2
Caritas Don Bosco	1	0	Poveda Learning Center	1	1
Int'l Christian School	1	2	Miriam College	1	0
Southville Int'l School	0	1	St. Francis of Assisi Bacoor	1	0
Woodrose Alabang	0	1	St. Jude Catholic School	0	1
St. Paul's College Pasig	0	1	Hope Christian School	0	1
Emilio Aguinaldo College	0	2	Assumption College	0	1
ICA Greenhills	x	x	OB Montessori Sta. Ana	0	2
Grace Christian School	x	x	Reedley's Int'l. School	0	3

From left to right: GVIT Group A leader Colegio San Agustin routed E. Aguinaldo College 25-3, 25-3 in 2-sets. Caritas Don Bosco went 3 sets against Southville Int'l 25-22, 14-25 and 26-24. Diliman Preparatory School surprised Rizal High School in 2 straight matches with their smaller but faster players 18-25, 20-25.

GVIT Group B winners in last weekend's matches were: OBM Las Pinas 25-15 25-18 over Reedley's International; OBM Las Pinas 22-25, 25-23, 25-7 over OBM Sta. Ana; Poveda beat Reedley's Int'l School 25-22, 25-23. Other winners were: Olivarez College over St. Jude Catholic School 16-25, 25-22, 25-16; ICA Dasmarinas defeated Hope Christian School 12-25, 25-19, 25-19.

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1st Elimination Round (3-Stag), Roligon Mega Cockpit
September 27, 2004
2nd Elimination Round (3-Stag), Araneta Coliseum
September 29, 2004
Final Round (4-Stag), Araneta Coliseum

2nd LEG — Leg Champion Trophy
7-STAG DERBY
October 12, 2004
Elimination Round (3-Stag), Araneta Coliseum
October 14, 2004
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7-STAG DERBY
October 25, 2004
Elimination Round (3-Stag), Roligon Mega Cockpit
October 27, 2004
Championship Round (4-Stag), Roligon Mega Cockpit

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NISSAN

Cards advance; Braves gain tie

LOS ANGELES—Jeff Suppan retired the final 14 batters he faced and Albert Pujols hit a crucial three-run home run as St. Louis registered a 6-2 win over Los Angeles and closed out their National League Division Playoff Series in four games.

"Great win, great team effort and we are looking forward to things to come," Suppan said.

By advancing to the National League Championship Series for the third time in five seasons, the Cardinals put behind them their game three woes, when they managed just five singles.

Against Perez and Alvarez (0-1), the best offense in the league saw a return to form as Pujols finished with four RBI, Reggie Sanders added a solo homer and Larry Walker scored three runs.

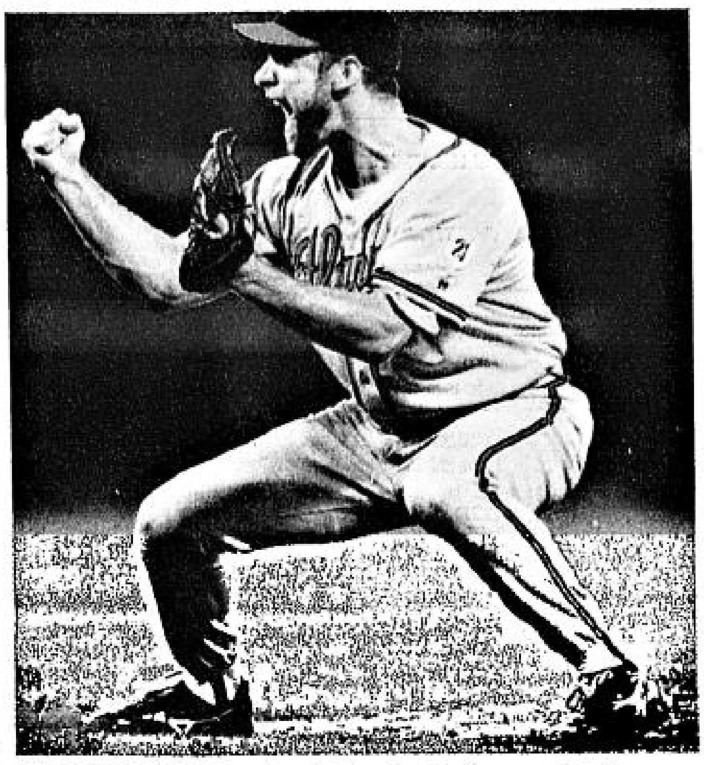
The early offense gave Suppan (1-0) some wiggle room and he dominated with the lead.

A 16-game winner in the regular season, Suppan made his first career playoff appearance a superb one, allowing two runs and two hits in seven innings.

Meanwhile, JD Drew singled to drive in a run in the top of the ninth inning and lift the Atlanta Braves to a 6-5 win over Houston on Sunday and force the Astros into Monday's fifth and deciding game.

The winner was John Smoltz (1-0), who escaped a dicey situation in the eighth, then worked out of real trouble in the ninth inning.

With runners at the corners and one out, Smoltz got Jeff Kent—the most productive offensive second baseman of his era—to bounce into a game-ending double play. *AFP*



ATLANTA'S John Smoltz shows his joy after the Braves pulled off a double play to beat the Houston Astros, 6-5, and tie their series at 2-2. AP

Rockets cool Heat despite Shaq's attack

HOUSTON—Shaquille O'Neal conceded it felt different wearing a Miami Heat uniform. For those playing against him, it was different seeing a little less of O'Neal.

Looking surprisingly nimble and quick for such an early point in the pre-season, O'Neal needed only 22 minutes to show how several NBA norms remain the same despite his recent change of address. Specifically, he can still dominate Yao Ming and Dikembe Mutombo, and his touch around the basket is as good as his foul shooting is poor.

O'Neal had 17 points and seven rebounds Sunday night in his debut for his new team as the Miami Heat opened the NBA's exhibition slate with an 85-75 loss to the Houston Rockets.

"He looks real skinny," Yao said. "He's much better. He runs better and he jumps better. He's tougher this year because he's in such great shape right now."

Following a summer in which he endeavored to stay fit, O'Neal—listed at 325 pounds (146 kilograms)—didn't have any dunks and didn't even draw a sellout crowd. But what he did do, and the manner in which he did it, was certainly enough to validate the hopes of Miami fans whose excitement level has gone off the charts thanks to the team's huge off-season addition.

Wearing a new number, 32 instead of 34, and clad in black and red rather than the familiar purple and gold of the Los Angeles Lakers, O'Neal gave a hearty handshake to Yao and waved to Yao's parents prior to the opening tipoff. He then recovered from a shaky start—getting scored on by Yao and losing the ball the first time he touched it on offense—to make three consecutive shots.

"Shaq is about 30 or 40 pounds (13.5 or 18 kilograms) lighter," Tracy McGrady said. "He's even more dominating. His defense is even going to be better this year." *AP*

Steroid-using slugger dies

WASHINGTON—Former Major League Baseball all-star Ken Caminiti, who admitted taking steroids to boost his playing career, died of a heart attack on Sunday. He was 41.

The ex-MVP of the National League and gold glove winner was selected to the all-star team three times. But he struggled to find his place in society once his playing days ended three years ago.

He blasted 239 homers and 983 RBI and was a .272 career hitter. His best season came in 1996, when he hit 40 home runs and 130 RBI for the San Diego Padres.

The much travelled Caminiti played for Atlanta, Houston, San Diego and Texas. *AFP*

CAMINITI

Woods unsure when honeymoon will end

JACKSONVILLE, Florida—Tiger Woods always said he had to win a major for it to be considered a great year, but he might have found an exception last week when he got married in Barbados.

"As far as off the course, it is a great year," Woods said Sunday from his yacht, where he and new bride Elin Nordegren have been diving on their honeymoon since their marriage at Sandy Lane Resort in the Caribbean.

Sounding more relaxed than ever, Woods is in no hurry to resurface.

His next tournament is supposed to be the Funai Classic at Disney, which starts Oct. 21 about 10 minutes away from his home in Florida, but Woods did not say whether he was going to play. "I'm having so much fun on my honeymoon, I don't know if I'll be back or not," he said. *AP*

3 perish before World Cup tiff

JOHANNESBURG—Three people died in a crush in Conakry ahead of a World Cup qualifier on Sunday and another match in Monrovia was repeatedly stopped as police battled to control rioting spectators.

The three deaths occurred as fans sought to buy tickets for the African zone Group Five match between Guinea and Morocco, which ended in a 1-1 draw.

Eye witnesses said the three who died had been trampled in a crush as a crowd of 35,000 sought to gain entry to the derelict September 22 stadium in the Guinean capital.

In Monrovia, Ivorian referee Aboubacar Sharaf twice stopped the Group One match between Liberia and Senegal after fans pelted objects on to the pitch as the home side conceded two second-half goals in a 3-0 defeat.

There was a brief stoppage after Senegal's second goal. *Reuters*

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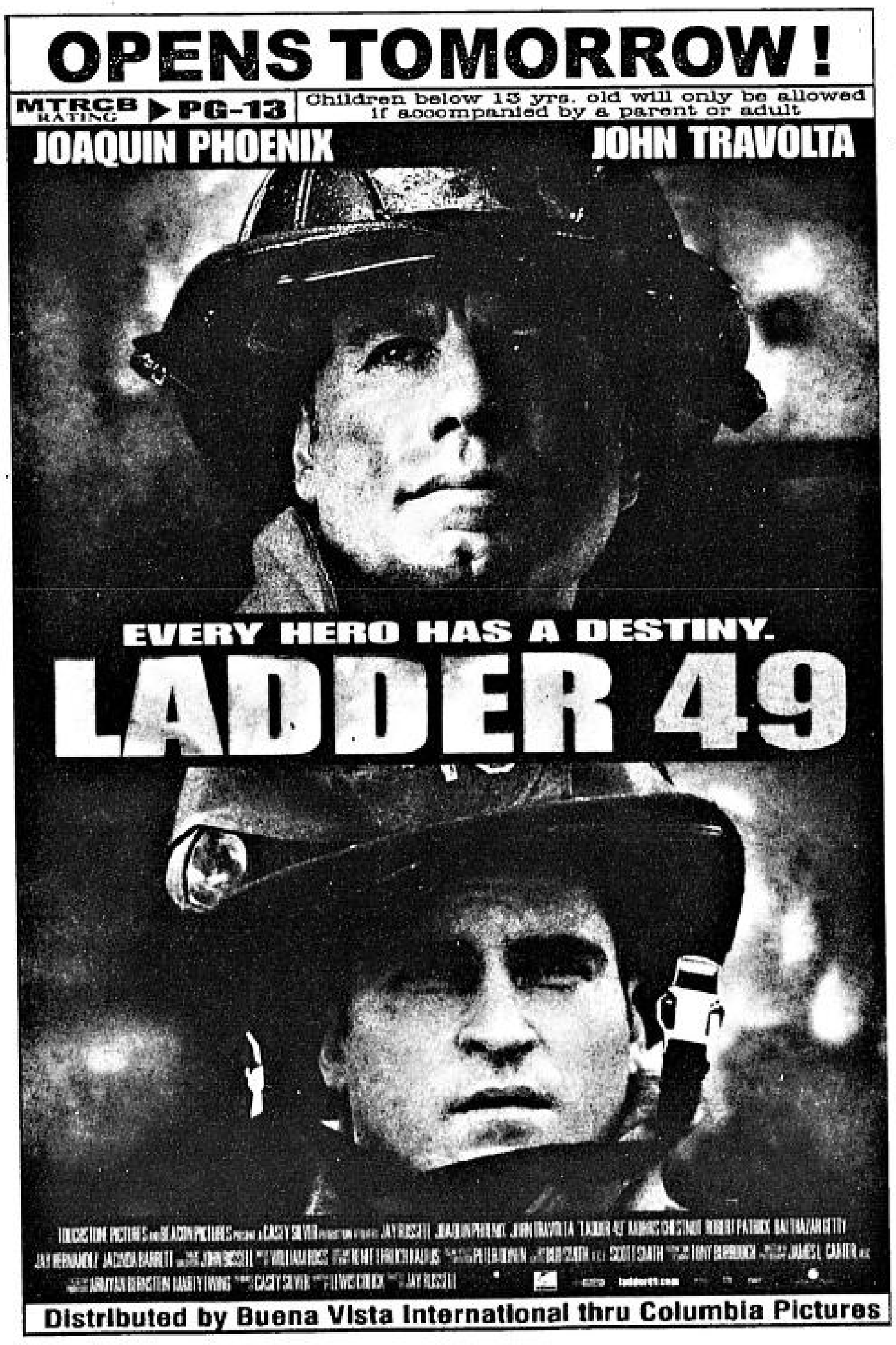
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Dealing with the plague of plagiarism

VIEWFINDER

Nestor U. Torre

FROM time to time, we receive complaints from screenwriters who bewail the plagiarism of their scripts by other writers, or by directors and producers.

The complaints have become so frequent and urgent that we've gotten in touch with some of our film leaders to inquire if they have established a procedure for handling and settling such complaints.

We were heartened to see that they shared our concern about their problem. They said they would firm up such a process, with the help of Intellectual Property Rights experts.

So, in future, complaints about plagiarism in the movies should be addressed to film-related organizations. We're glad to do our bit in being of assistance to screenwriters who feel that their works have been plagiarized, but the real help should come from the movie industry itself.

When we mentioned this development to some film workers, they were very enthusiastic about it, because they turned out to be past victims of plagiarism themselves.

How do the movie plagiarists work? Some cautionary notes on their gambits: They ask to read your storyline or script for possible production, but eventually turn it down for one reason or another.

Much later, however, they will make use of your title or parts of your story (or even all of them) in one of their future works—with no credit or payment going to you, of course.

One complainer wailed that his script was plagiarized into three different productions! This is like the process of "cannibalizing" a car, with the engine going to one vehicle, the chassis to a second, and the tires to a third! Funny—outrageous, but it happens.

How can a writer prove that his title, story or script has been plagiarized? First, by firmly establishing his authorship of the work, by having it copyrighted by the National Library.

Also, by keeping all of the drafts of his work, to help prove that he went through an entire process of creation and revision before coming up with the finished work.

The writer's original material would be able to show how his work has been plagiarized. The clearest proof is if entire scenes in his script and the plagiarist's production are identical.

It's tougher if the plagiarism involved is one of general format, like a treasure hunt or a story about prisoners. After all, anybody can think up story material of such general scope.

However, if the story's detailed development is too similar to the plagiarist's work to be coincidental, unauthorized copying can be proven.

The thing is, if writers feel strongly about the plagiarism of their work, they should collate all the evidence they can get before complaining. Plagiarism is a serious charge, so the accuser must be absolutely certain and determined to get the recognition and recompense that is his due.

San Miguel orchestra

THE PERFORMANCE schedule of the San Miguel orchestra and chorale this month is highlighted by their participation in "Ryan Cayabyab: The Musician at 50," at the CCP on Oct. 15 and 16.

Coinciding with the event is the official launch of "Great Original Pilipino Music by Ryan Cayabyab," the orchestra and chorale's new album.

On Oct. 19, the orchestra will be playing classical music at St. Cecilia's Hall in St. Scholastica's College, Manila. The orchestra will perform **Mozart**'s fifth violin concerto and the rarely heard overture from **Schubert**'s opera, "Rosamunde."

On Oct. 24, the chorale will perform at the First Filipino Youth Cultural Expo. For more information, visit www.smfpa.com.

'Steal'

GERARD Pire's "Steal" is about four wily bank robbers. A few more heists, and they can retire. Unfortunately, they stumble upon $20 million of mob money, and before they know it, hired killers and cops are hot on their trail. Stars include **Stephen Dorff**, **Natasha Henstridge** and **Bruce Payne.**

AXN Super Series

THIS month on AXN, "Alias" returns for its third season. After disappearing for two years without any memory of what transpired, CIA agent Sydney Bristow (**Jennifer Garner**) comes back to the world she once knew. But her return turns out to be painful, as she realizes that her memories hold secrets that many are willing to kill for.

AXN is also telecasting the new season of "The Shield." After nearly getting caught for corruption, the Strike Team unit of the LA Police Department is trying to lie low. However, stolen military ammunition stokes the enmity between the gangs in the neighborhood, and Aceveda suspects Mackey's team of stealing the missing money laundering operation.

JENNIFER Garner back in "Alias"

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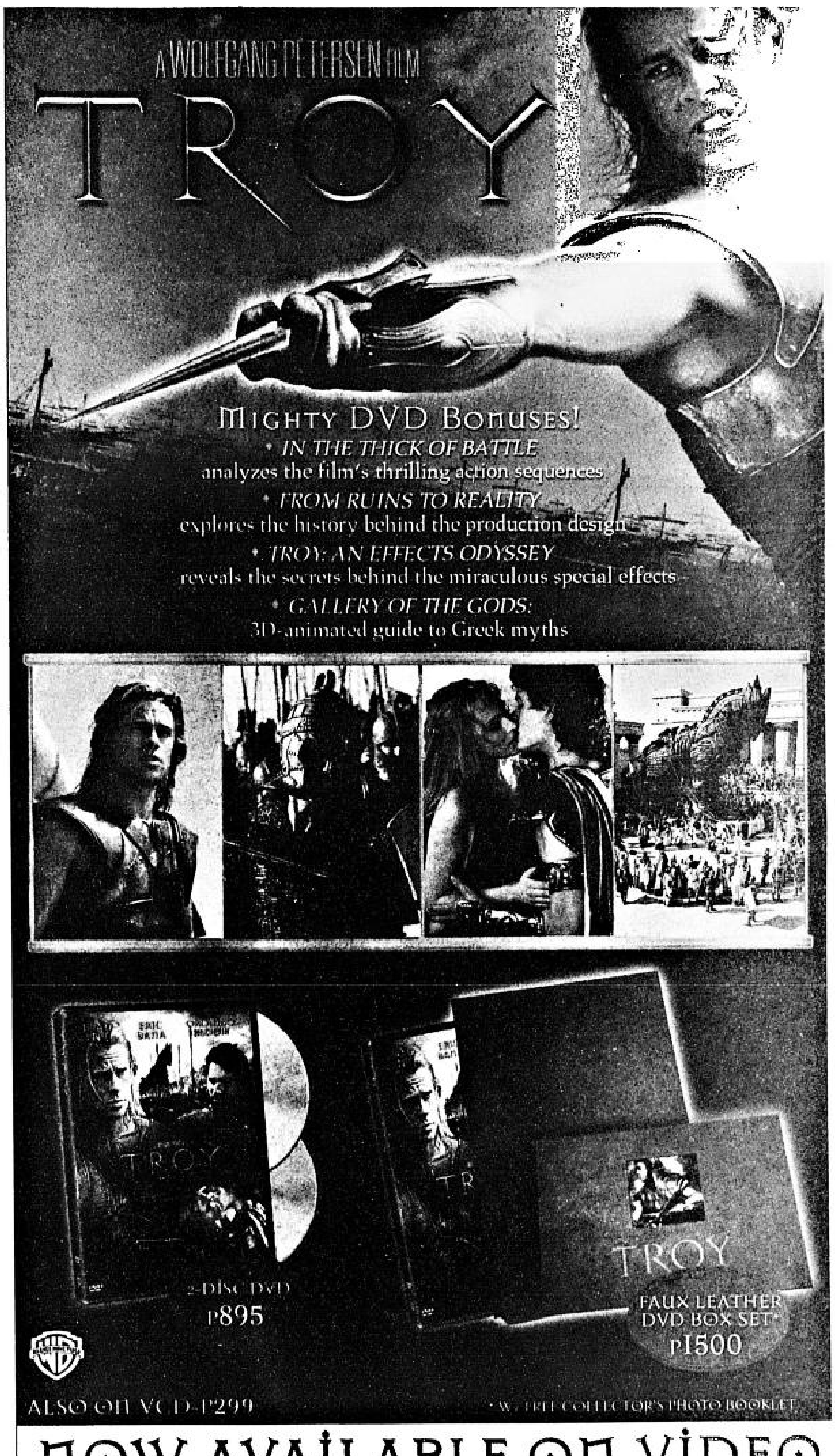

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Sheryl deserves a comeback

DOLLY WOOD

Dolly Ann Carvajal

SHERYL Cruz has been tapped to play the role of Bernadette, sister-in-law of the character played by **Vilma Santos**, in "Mano Po 3." She was chosen from among actresses vying to be part of Regal's Metro Manila film fest entry who included **Kris Aquino, Judy Ann Santos** and **Gretchen Barretto.**

A naughty insider asked me, "Was there any *pulitika* involved in the selection?"

I retorted, "That's not unheard of in show biz but it's not always the case. Even if the other actresses were more qualified, Sheryl deserves a fair chance to make a comeback and what better way for a comeback than by being part of "Mano Po 3'?"

Now all eyes will be on Sheryl. It will be quite a feat for her, especially because she'll be pitted against Vilma Santos.

"Mano Po 3's" script had to undergo several revisions before Vi finally gave her nod to do the movie.

Sheryl happens to be Vi's godchild, so no doubt they will be at ease with each other. This time around, it will be a different kind of baptism for *Ninang* Vi's *inaanak* Sheryl. Will it get blessed at the box office in December?

The entire cast will leave for China and shoot scenes there for a week. It's Vi's first time in China.

SHERYL Cruz. Was politics involved in her selection?

Guess who

GUESS who this married, award-winning action star is who was spotted checking into a three-star hotel with a sexy starlet.

Considering the actor's track record with women, I'm not a bit surprised that he continues to fool around. Playing the field seems like a way of life for him already. I guess his wife is already immune to his philandering.

The funny thing is, he's honest about his dishonesty. He readily admits that he has sired children with various women. Will the starlet be the mother of the actor's nth child? He certainly is observing the one-child policy. One child per woman, that is.

***

Guess who this young singer is who requested his ex-girlfriend to come out in the open to dispel rumors that he is gay.

It turns out that he's just using her as a front. Maybe he feels being known as gay would lessen his "market value" among his legions of female fans. But sometimes, the more you try to hide things, the more obvious they become.

'Not Ordinary'

KYLA's hit version of "Human Nature," a remake of a **Michael Jackson** original, is from the R&B princess' fourth album, "Not Your Ordinary Girl." It was followed by the title track, a breezy urban song written by **Jay-R**, featuring Kyla rapping with newbie **Jimmy Muna**. Its cute music video was directed by **Jeffrey Tan**.

Kyla's fourth album features 12 more songs, including a couple of **Keith Martin** compositions, another by songwriter **Art Strong**, as well as Kyla's versions of "Till They Take My Heart Away," **Gary V**'s "What More Can I Say," and "Because of You."

On Nov. 12, at 8 p.m. at the Araneta Coliseum, Kyla will be performing in her first major solo concert, also titled "Not Just Your Ordinary Girl." Joining her are **Luke Mejares, Nyoy Volante**, Keith Martin, the Maneouvers, **Ogie Alcasid** and **Regine Velasquez.**

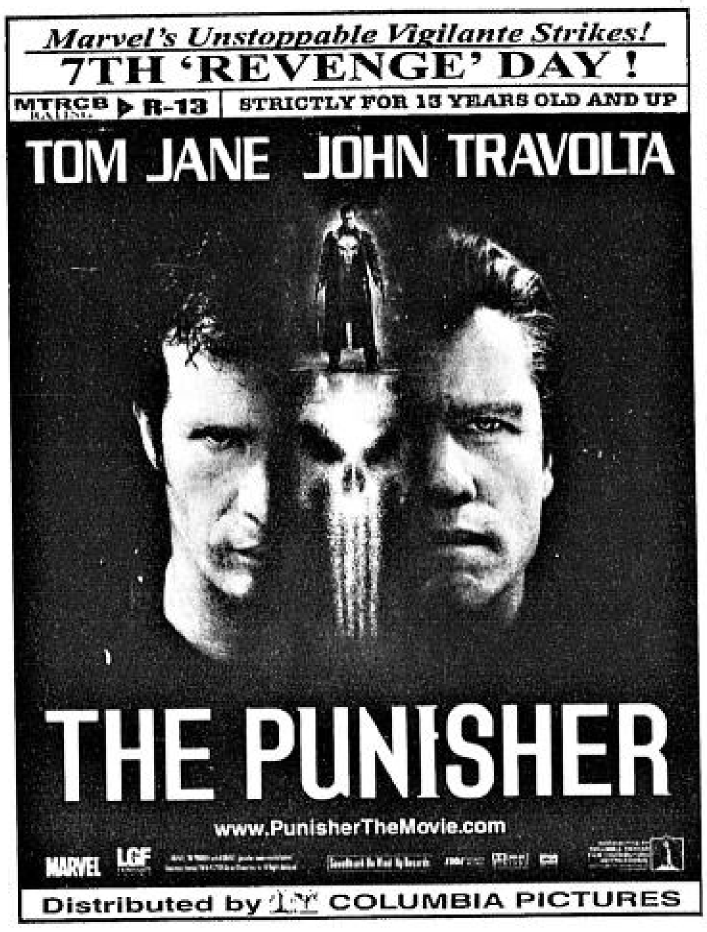
For more information, contact Ticketnet at 911-5555.

'Beyond Garments'

ART and fashion combine with video technology in "Au dela du vetement (Beyond Garments) Fashion Video...Fashion Moments" tonight at 8 p.m. at Greenbelt 1 Expo Exchange, Ayala Center, Makati City.

The spectacular show is presented by the Alliance Française de Manille in cooperation with Association Française d'Action Artistique (AFAA), The Young Designers Guild (YDG) and the Professional Models Association of the Philippines (PMAP).

For feedback, e-mail friends_elpueblo@yahoo.com or dollyanne@truefaithband.com.



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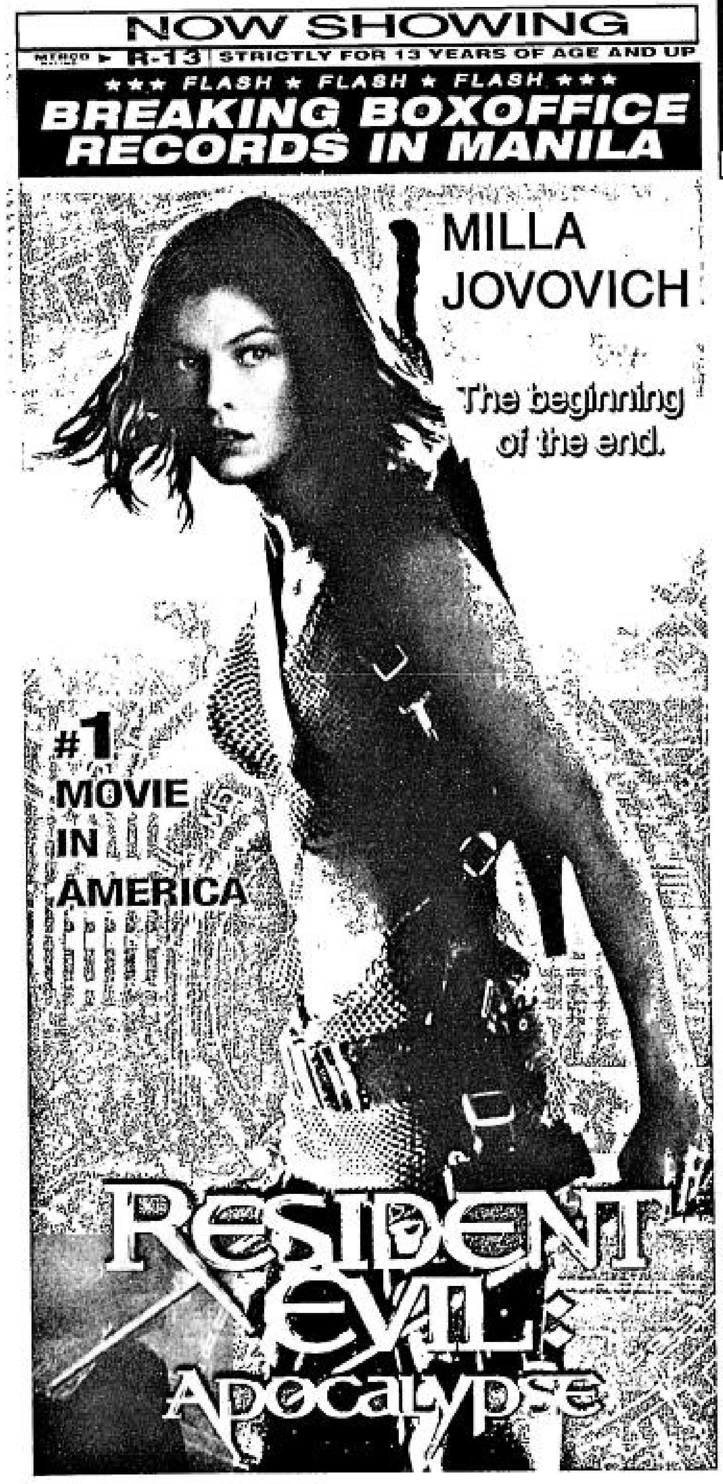

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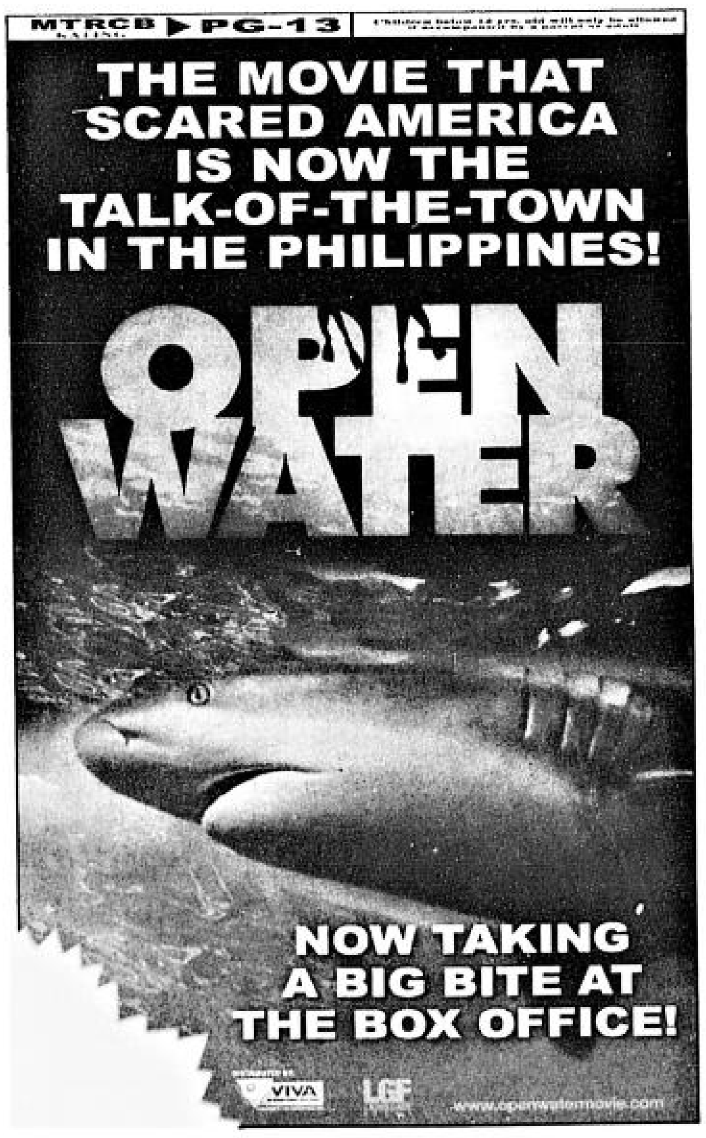

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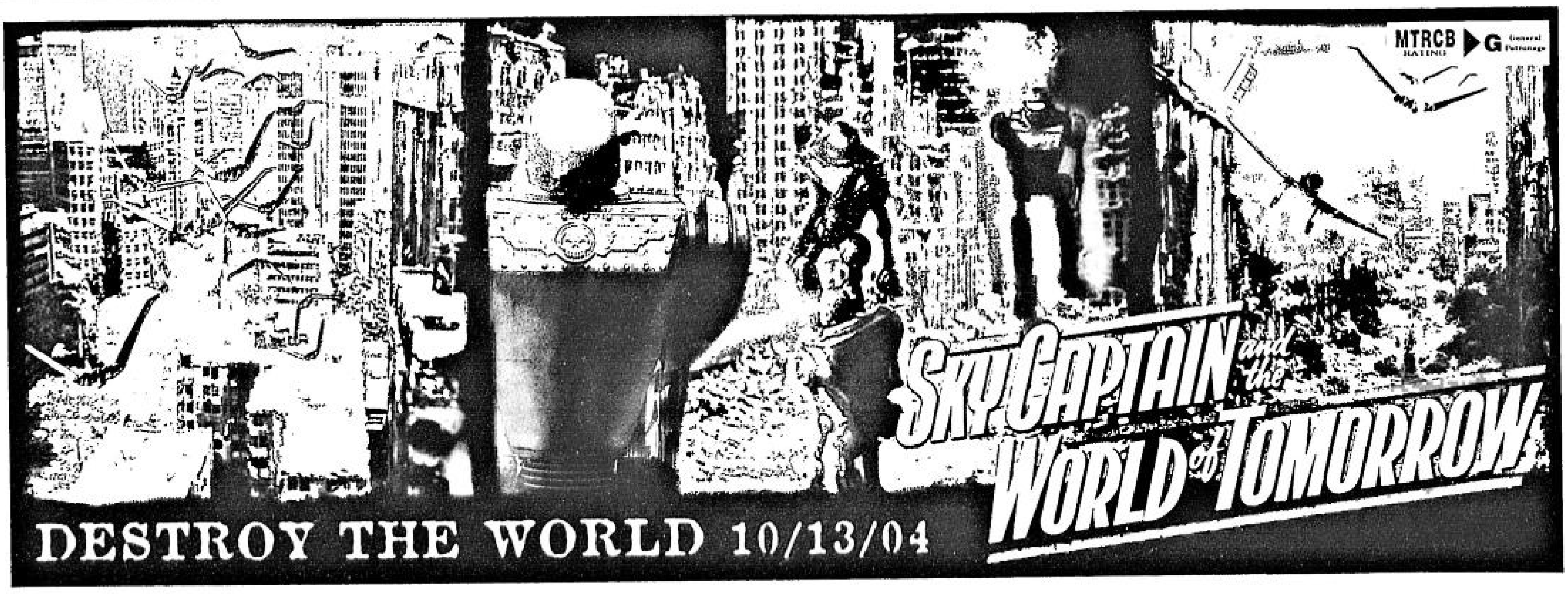

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SKY CAPTAIN and the WORLD of TOMORROW
DESTROY THE WORLD 10/13/04

JASMINE Trias, shown endorsing McDonald's, had to apply for three working permits.
JOSEPH AGCAOILI

American 'Idol' needed permits

SHOW STOPPER

By Jerome Aning

AS AN American citizen, Jasmine Trias had to obtain special work permits to appear in commercials and perform in a concert during her stay in Manila.

Bureau of Immigration Commissioner Alipio Fernandez Jr. yesterday said the "American Idol" finalist, through her authorized representatives, applied for the permits before she arrived last Thursday.

Filipino-American sportsmen and entertainers recently got into trouble with immigration authorities for violating this requirement.

Fernandez said the 17-year-old Trias was granted two work permits on Oct. 6, and a third on Friday.

The first permit allowed her to promote a popular fast-food chain through mall shows, store visits, and other media-covered events from Oct. 7 to 10.

The second permit is for her appearance in the concert "Jasmine Trias: Fil-Am Idol Live in Manila" at the Araneta Coliseum on Oct. 16.

The concert also stars Filipino performers Erik Santos, Jay-R and Christian Bautista.

The third permit is for her promotional and advertising activities for a telecommunications firm.

BI technical assistant Manuel Ferdinand Arbas said Trias and her sponsors fulfilled all the conditions for getting the permits, including an endorsement from the Organisasyon ng mga Pilipinong Mang-aawit.

Aye, it's...

From page A24

ties, and helping pass federal legislation enabling disabled people to return to work and still receive disability benefits.

He was frequently seen on Capitol Hill and elsewhere drumming up funding for research into a variety of diseases, delivering gripping testimony even as his health deteriorated.

Reeve authored two books after his accident: "Still Me" (1998), which became a New York Times bestseller, and "Nothing is Impossible: Reflections on a New Life" (2002). His audio recordings of the books were both nominated for Grammy Awards.

He often credited his wife, actress Dana Reeve, for his recovery and ability to pursue his advocacy work, in which she was also an active participant.

REUTERS, AFP

Looking for boys from the band

THE SUNDOWNERS, the popular rock band of the '60s, is looking for its former members for a possible reunion concert next year.

Emil Panis, Sonny Panis and Edwin Bautista are looking for other members of the band—Raymond Estella, Renato "Ato" Quitoriano, Bing Vasco, Jet Tolentino, Arthur Morta, Bong Ronquillo, Bob Ramos, Bobby Vasquez, Leoni Nunez and Jimmy Ortega.

They may contact Emil at vapemil@netzero.com or (702) 2070901 in the US; Sonny at cjp@christian.com.ph, or Edwin at edwin.bautista@cebupacificair.com or 8529268.

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SM City Baguio Cinema 4
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Audience all shook up as Ogie sings 'You Raise Me Up'

By Nini Valera

"I SAW panic on their faces, then fear," Ogie Alcasid recalled.

Ogie was singing "You Raise Me Up" during his concert "I Am a Singer" at the Music Museum last Friday night when an intensity 4 earthquake hit the city.

"I heard glasses breaking, people screaming, then holding back the screams," Ogie said. "All I could do was tell them to relax and not panic."

About 20 people in the audience actually ran out of the Music Museum, according to Ogie, who performed before a full house.

"But they came back after the earthquake was finished," he said.

"It was good he was singing that song ('You Raise Me Up') because it had a calming effect on the audience," said a journalist who watched the show.

"Ogie was crying while he was singing it," the journalist said. "So were some people in the audience. But no one really panicked. I think the song kept their spirits up. It probably made them feel safe."

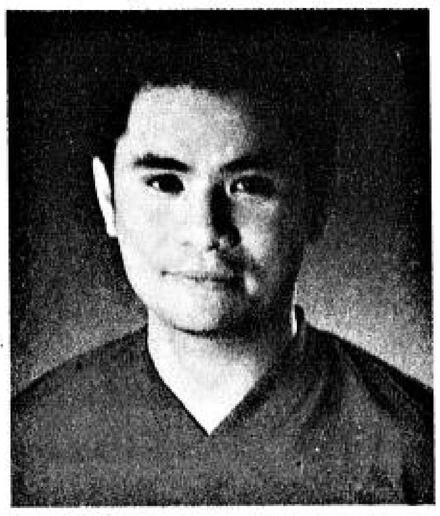
Ogie said the quake had an eerie effect on the show. "The people actually clapped when I finished singing Josh Groban's song," he said. "I think the earthquake was a wake-up call."

It also livened up the audience, he said. "At first, it was just the usual subdued clapping," he related. "But after the earthquake, the crowd clapped more and louder. The people woke up and were alive even after the show ended. It seemed they were relieved that they were still there."

There was dancing toward the end, said the singer, who might have a repeat of his show next month.

Does he mind a repeat of the earthquake?

"Can do," he said. "If that would put people in the mood, *puwede rin*."



OGIE Alcasid says the tremor actually made the people clap louder.

'Aye, it's Superman!'

NEW YORK—Despite his theater credentials and work on television, Christopher Reeve is best known as the hero of the "Superman" films.

He was a virtual unknown when he was chosen from 200 candidates to become the big screen's incarnation of 1978's "Superman," in which he played fumbling Clark Kent who at will turns into the flying superhero.

In 1993 he appeared in the Merchant and Ivory hit "The Remains of the Day," which was filmed in the English countryside. But even there, it was hard to shrug off his superhero image.

"It is very strange to walk into the House and Hound, some pub from the 15th century in the middle of Wilshire someplace, then—'Aye, it's Superman, here he comes!'" he said in an 1993 interview on Cable News Network.

Reeve, 52, paralyzed after a fall from a horse nine years ago, died in a New York hospital of heart failure Sunday, his publicist said on Monday. An accomplished rider who owned several horses, Reeve suffered multiple injuries including two shattered neck vertebrae when he was thrown from his horse at an equestrian event in Commonwealth Park in Virginia in May 1995.

Ironically, Reeve had just played in a TV film about a paralyzed man, "Above Suspicion," which aired the week before his crash. It was the tale of a policeman who became paralyzed after he was hit in the spine by a bullet.

Reeve talked about how he had gone to a hospital to prepare for the role, during a television interview before the accident.

"A couple of days spent out at the spinal cord trauma unit and you see how easily it can happen," the actor said. "You think, God, it could happen to anybody."

CAPED CRUSADER. Many years after taking off the red and blue suit, Reeve was still recognized as the alter ego of the fumbling Clark Kent and the flying superhero eclipsed his other characters such as the dapper time traveler in "Somewhere in Time" (above, with Jane Seymour).

"The part came to me because ... I have the look," Reeves, referring to his Superman character, said in an interview. "It's 90 percent look. If I didn't look like the guy in the comic book, I wouldn't be here. The other 10 percent is acting talent."

The original "Superman" was a box-office hit when it came out in 1978. Reeve reprised the role in "Superman II" (1981), "Superman III" (1983), and "Superman IV" (1987).

The son of an English professor and his journalist wife, Reeve attended the Julliard school in New York City and graduated from Cornell University in Ithaca, New York.

Earlier movies include "Gray Lady Down," "Somewhere in Time," "Switching Channels," "The Bostonians" and "Deathtrap."

Other movie credits included "The Bostonians" (1984) and "Remains of the Day" (1994).

Dark haired, with a rugged chiseled-from-stone face, Reeve towered at 1.93 meters (6-foot-4).

When he was filming the Superman movies he would work out three hours a day, and eat four meals to bring his weight from 84 to 98 kilos (188 to 218 pounds).

After the fall, Reeve had an entirely different look, which also struck a deep chord—he was confined to a wheelchair, his head propped on a headrest, a tube attached to his throat.

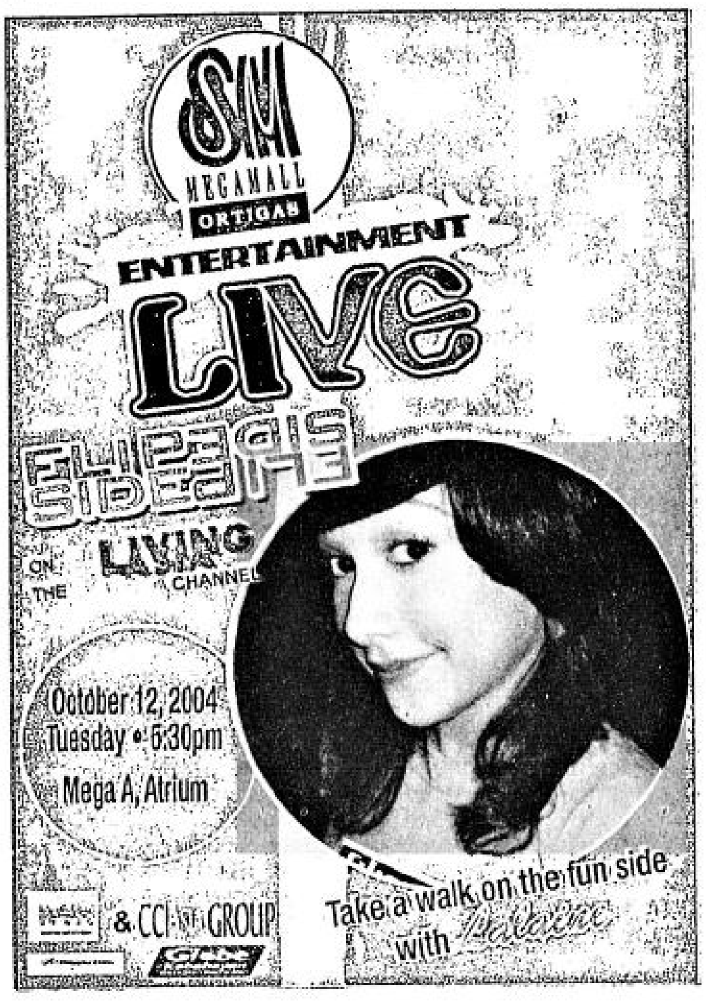
He continued his artistic career, directing television and film to critical acclaim, and starring in a made-for-television version of Alfred Hitchcock's "Rear Window" that earned him a Screen Actors Guild acting award.

But Reeve was far more visible as an activist on behalf of the disabled.

Through charitable organizations he founded and chaired, Reeve supported research seeking treatments and a cure for spinal cord injury paralysis and other central nervous system disorders.

He championed improved quality of life for the disabled, leading efforts to organize challenging sports events for people with disabili-

AYE/ A23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GWYNETH PALTROW, JUDE LAW AND ANGELINA JOLIE

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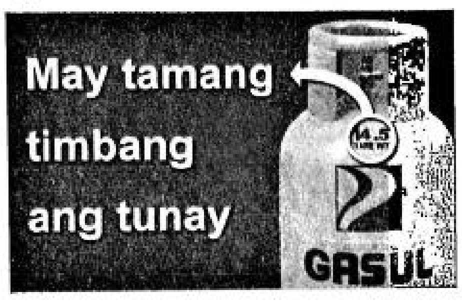
Sky Captain is pure saving-the-world pulp fantasy.

Opened #1 at the U.S. boxoffice, the $80m budgeted film directed by Kerry Conran, uses the latest state of the art *fx* gadgets to give you never-seen-before images that dazzles the senses.

ADVT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GASUL

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T-bill rates rise on inflation fears

By Michelle V. Remo

TREASURY bill rates rose across all maturities yesterday as banks sought a higher risk premium following the aggressive movement of inflation and warnings of a credit-rating downgrade.

The yield of the 91-day bills, the benchmark used by banks in pricing their loans, rose by 13.3 basis points to 7.772 percent. The rate for the 182-day paper inched up by 30.9 points to 8.845 percent, while the 364-day T-bill rate increased by 13.1 points to 9.904 percent. (100 basis points is equivalent to one percentage point.)

"Apparently banks are inputting several factors in their bids, such as inflation and talks of a credit-rating downgrade," National Treasurer Mina Figueroa said in a press briefing after yesterday's auction.

Figueroa, who has resigned as treasurer effective Oct. 16, said, the Bureau of Treasury could not fully comprehend the way banks behaved during the auction. She noted the stronger demand for the one-year debt paper, and the weak appetite for the 91- and 182-day bills.

"We are getting mixed signals from the way the banks are bidding. If they fear an increase in interest rates, usually they would go more for the shorter term instruments (91- and 182-day bills)," she said.

Banks, however, showed more interest in investing in the 364-day paper, which was oversubscribed. Tenders for the one-year bills reached P4.66 billion compared with the government's offering of only P3 billion.

The 91- and 182-day bills were both undersubscribed. Tenders for the three-month debt paper reached only P4.18 billion, or lower than the government's scheduled borrowing of P4.5 billion. Tenders for the six-month T-bills reached P2.4 billion compared with the government's offering of P3.5 billion.

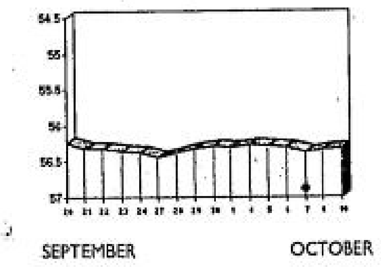
The government raised P3 billion

T-BILL/ B4

INDICATORS

CURRENCIES

PESO-DOLLAR RATE



P 56.325 = $ 1
As of 5 p.m., Oct. 11, 2004

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As of 5 p.m., Oct. 8, 2004

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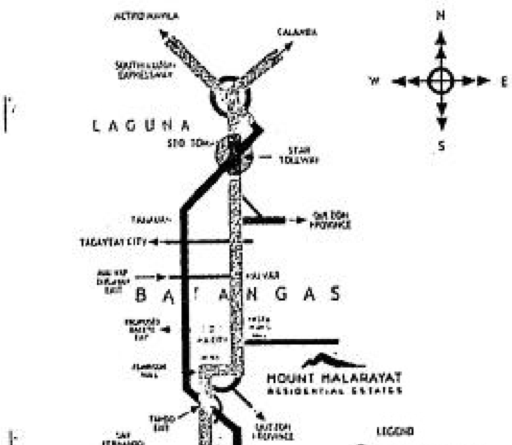

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CMMA AWARDS SET TONIGHT

THE
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MEDIA
AWARDS

Pres. Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo leads guests and awardees for this year's awards ceremonies of the 26th Catholic Mass Media Awards (CMMA) at the Henry Lee Irwin Theatre, Ateneo de Manila University, Loyola Heights in Quezon City starting at 4 o'clock in the afternoon.

STAR-STUDDED SHOW awaits audience and televiewers

Multi awarded director/ actor Eric Quizon and G. Toengi will play hosts to today's affair. An impressive list of showbiz personalities who will render songs & production numbers includes Angelica dela Cruz, Jay R, Malik, Jamie Rivera, Sheryn Regis, Jong Cuenco, Geneva Cruz, Jolina Magdangal and the Akafellas, among others.

Award presentors will also come from the media world, the bishops and the clergy. Concept and overall direction is handled by Leo Rialp & production supervision by Tin Bartolome.

The Awards Night will be telecast on ABC 5 at 10:30pm on Saturday October 16.

An impresive list of personalities will be presenting the various categories which include industry as well as student awards in print, radio, television, cinema, internet, and music.

Ambassador Antonio L. Cabangon-Chua, CMMA Chairman and Manila Archbishop Gaudencio B. Rosales said that President Arroyo is expected to deliver a timely message about the renewed vision of mass media.

This year's theme is "The Media and the Family: A Risk and a Richness."

Archbishop Rosales stressed it is CMMA's mission "to inspire more responsibility, authenticity, truthfulness and nobility in media."

Ambassador Cabangon Chua, for his part, said the awards night is the time of the year that CMMA recognizes media works that give due honor and respect to the Almighty God, and moral laws and orders that uphold Filipino values and work towards transformation of Philippine society.

The CMMA was first given out in 1978 with His Eminence Pope John Paul II gracing the awarding ceremonies. By handing over the trophies to the winners, the Pontiff gave immense significance to mass media and its pervasive influence in the lives of Filipino people.

Now on its 26th year, the annual award is the Archdiocese of Manila's way of honoring media practitioners for their brilliant work and paying tribute to their trade, their industry, and to their service to the people.

The CMMA was launched in 1978 by then Manila Archbishop Jaime L. Cardinal Sin to honor media works and practitioners who made outstanding contributions to God and the Church.

Initiated this year, the Board of Trustees has conceived of the Jaime L. Cardinal Sin SERVIAM awards to pay tribute to men, women and groups who have made outstanding contributions to country and the Church. This year's Serviam awardees are

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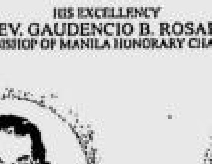
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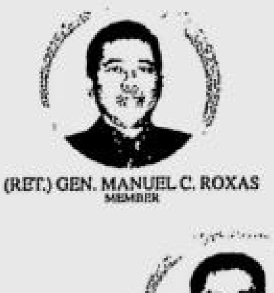
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2004 CMMA FINALISTS

STUDENT CMMA

Best Student Organ: Grade School Dept.-*Paet-English Version by Paete Elem. School, Paet-Filipino Version by Paete Elem. School, Centreglipiks by Carmona Elem. School;* High School Dept.-*The Makati Science Vision by Makati Science High School, Ang Bakulo by St. Agustine School of Cavite, The Lathe by Batangas State Univ., Ang Klaryon by Tanza National Comprehensive High School, The Ridge by PAREF-Southridge School;* College Dept- *Lavoxa by DLSU Lipa, The Lathe Newsletter by Batangas State Univ., Tinig Loyola by Loyola School of Theology, Internos by UST Faculty of Sacred Theology;* Best Literary Publication: High School-*Katukayo Literary Folio by Letran College, Kuwerdas by Makati Science High School, Heaven's Kitchen by Immaculate Conception Academy, Greenhills;* College Dept.-*Utak Berde by DLSU Lipa, Fragments Senior Folio by Miriam College, Analects III by Lyceum of Batangas, Dapitan by UST;* Best TV Production: *Mayin Paghabayu by Assumption Col., Hanunoo by Letran College, Bakas ng Lahar by Letran College;* Best Short Film: *Takatak by Letran College, Cuatro Manos by UP Diliman, Upos na Kandila by St. Paul Univ. QC, 5110 by Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila;* Best Public Service Print Ad: *May Kulay Ang Buhay Kung May Alay Kamay by PAREF-Southridge School, Noon, Ngayon at Bukas by Letran College, I have Two Hands by Letran College;* Best Public Service TV Ad:*Karat-e by St. Paul Univ. QC, Pag-asa by Letran College, Pamilya Muna by Letran College, Sorry Brod by Letran College, Patay Guts by UST;* Best Public Service Radio Ad: *Kasambahay Center by Batangas State University, Papa & Puppy by Letran College;* Best Radio Production: *Bukang Liwayway by Polytechnic Univ. of the Phils., limandaang Piso ng Buhay by Pamantasan ng Lungsod ng Maynila.*

PRINT

Best Business Column: *Contractualization: Thorn in the Labor's Flesh by Dr. Jose Maximiano of Manila Standard, Business of Squatting by Wilson Lee Flores of Phil. Star, Marketing RX of Dr. Ned & Ardy Roberto of Phil. Daily Inquirer;* Best News Photograph: *La Pieta by Roger Rañada of Manila. Times, Hold on Son by Revoli Cortez of Phil. Star, Sunset in Pikit, The Edwin Bacasmas of Phil Daily Inquirer, Scavengers by Jim Guiao Punzalan of Phil. Daily Inquirer, Christmas for Street Children by Boy Cabrido of Phil. Daily Inquirer;* Best Children's Magazine: *Jesus Magazine by Communication Foundation for Asia, Kids Plus by FCL-Asia, Rainbows by Readings Inc.;* Best Youth Magazine: *Gospel Komiks by CFA, Wasteland and Faceless by TG&Y by FCL-Asia, Misang Pambata by Pambatang Katekista;* Best Comic Strip: *Bea by Jericho Natividad of Jesus Magazine, BJ & Kids by Joseph Duyan & Renato Vibiesca by Baby Jesus Magazine, Pupung by Tonton Young of Manila Bulletin, Super Bayani by Glen Isaac of Diwaliwan Magazine, Love Knots by Elizabeth Chionglo of Phil. Daily Inquirer;* Best Comic Episodic-Children Category: *Ang Punla by Divino Pagkatipunan of Gospel Komiks, Si Ima of Jopay de Luna of Gospel Komiks, Kasali ba si Gamu-gamo sa Giyera ng Langgam? By Dr. LuisP. Gatmaitan, MD of Gospel Komiks, Minsan may Isang Makabuluhang Dula sa Buhay ng Isang Bata & Isang Pangkaraniwang Kwento by Nicodemus Melgar of Gospel Komiks, Powermark by Steve Benintendi,* Adult Category- *Pangarap Para sa Pangarap ng Iba by Emily Ventura of Gospel Komiks for Young People, Ang Manikang de Baterya ni Neria by Nicodemus Melgar of Gospel Komiks, Salvacion Calabucal: Outstanding Teacher, by Orly Aquino of TG&Y;* Best Entertainent/ Educational Column: *I am a Child by Marita Villafuerta of Baby Magazine, Anak TV by Mag Cruz Hatol of Manila Bulletin;* Best Short Story-Children Category: *Si Biboy at Kanyang mga Kaibigan by Alexander Umali of Jesus Magazine, Pit Senyor! By Nicodemus Melgar of Pambata Magazine, A Great Miracle & El & Ey by Mary Ann Floresta of ABC Educ. Dev't. Center, Ang Lola ni Topet by Susie Borrero of Rainbows;* Adult Category: *Ang Maglakad sa Tubig by Louie Jon Sanchez of Gospel Komiks for Young People, Paskong Kakaiba by Francis Banta of Barkada Magazine, My Auntie Idad by Grace Chong of ME Magazine;* Best Special Feature: *The Good News from Asia by Fr. June Ranera, RCJ of Rogate Ergo Phils., Embraced by God by Rogate Ergo Phils, What Peace Means to Me by Soroptimist Int'l. of Makati, A Retailer's Story by Socorro Santos of Entrepreneur Phils., Rise from Rags to Riches by Entrepreneur Phils., Yes, The Filipino Can by Grace Leung of Good Housekeeping;* Best Investigative Report: *Why Angat Dam is Drying Up by Alfred Dalizon of People's Journal, A Cold Christmas by Veronica Uy of Good Housekeeping;* Best News Coverage: *The RP ICT Industry Review & Offshore Outsourcing: Still the New Hope of the Phil. IT Industry by Melba Jean Valdez of Computerworld Phils., Jose Pidal Stories & Sars Stories by Phil. Daily Inquirer;* Best Opinion Column: *On the Spot! By Atty. Jobert Peñaflorida of Sun-Star Iloilo, payo ni Dean by Amado Valdez of People's Tonight, Man Does Not live by Bed Alone by Wilson Lee Flores of Phil. Star, Get Real by Solita Monsod of Phil. Daily Inquirer.*

RADIO

Best Business News or Feature: *Sikap Pinoy & Radyo Negosyo by ABS-CBN DZMM, What's New by SBN-Mom's Radio Cebu;* Best Counselling & Public Service Program: *The Love Clinic by Monster Radio RX 93.1, Tindero sa Rdayo by NBC DZAR 1026, Mom's Radio (Parenting Club) by Mom's Radio Bacolod & Vigan, Ngayon na Bayan by RBN DZRJ 810AM, Katapat:Mayor Fred Lim & Sagot Ko Yan by ABS-CBN DZMM, Super Kalusugan by GMA DZBB, Buhay Tagumpay & Asin Ug Kahayag by ABS-CBN Cebu DYAB 1512, Memories on Radio by ABS-CBN 192.7 DXBC;* Best Drama Episode: *Ang Tagapagligtas by ABS-CBN DZMM, The Love Clinic by Monster Radio RX 93.1, Sa Kanyang Panahon by MBC-DZRH;* Best Drama Series: *Maria Luisa by MBC-DZRH, Pitlag! By Pathways Productions, Nagmamahal, Manay Gina by GMA DZBB;* Best Entertainment Program: *Back to the Eighties by Monster Radio RX 93.1, Awit, Tula at Balagtasan by PBS-DZRM, Sentimental Journey by ABS-CBN Cebu;* Best Special Event Coverage: *The Oakwood Mutiny by ABS-CBN DZMM and The Oakwood Mutiny by GMA DZBB;* Best Educational Program: *Back to the Eighties & Heard on Thursdays by Monster Radio RX 93.1, Pitlag! By RMN, Morning Chat-Mom's Kitchen by SBN Mom's Radio Cebu, Punto po Punto by FBS DWRL, Super Kalusugan by GMA DZBB, Sa Kabukiran & Bago Yan Ah! by ABS- CBN DZMM, Go Modern Agriculture by ABS-CBN Davao DXAB, Morning Chat-Craft Mom by SBN Mom's Radio Bacolod, Morning Chat-Dr. Mom by SBN Mom's Radio Davao, Morning Chat-Health from A-Z by SBN Mom's Radio Laoag, Morning Chat- Empowered Mom by SBN Mom's Radio Cagayan de Oro;* Best Sports Program: *Sports Talk by ABS-CBN DZMM, Sports ka na ba? by ABS-CBN Davao DXAB;* Best Special Feature: *Ang Diwa ng EDSA by Bombo Radyo Davao, Deretsong Impormasyon at Kasiyahan by PBS-DZRM, Paksa by ABS-CBN DZMM,, Mom's Vineyard-Wayward Son by SBN Mom's Radio Laoag, Mom's Vineyard-Daniel & Lion's Den by SBN Mom's Radio Cebu, Halalan 2004 by ABS-CBN DWRR;* Best News Commentary: *Saksi sa Dobol B & Dobol A sa Dobol B by GMA DZBB, Banat 1296 by ABS-CBN Davao DYAB;* Best News Program: *Bombo Network News-Evening Edition by Bombo Radyo Phils., Radyo Patrol Balita Alas Siyete by ABS-CBN DZMM, Super Balita sa Hapon by GMA DZBB;* Best Radio Documentary:*Saludo ka kay Kiko ABS-CBN DZMM.*

INTERNET

Best Website: *www.probefound.com byProbe Foundation, genrev.net by Genrev Student Network, www.xs.edu.ph by Xavier School.*

ADVERTISING

Best Branded Outdoor Ad: *Bandage of Adidas by TBWA/Santiago Mangada Puno, Age Doesn't Matter to be Holy by Don Bosco Tech. Col, Filipino and Proud of Bayo by MacGraphics Carranz;* Best Public Service Outdoor Ad: *Maron by MacGraphics Carranz, Braile & Camote of Knowledge Channel by Campaigns & Grey;* Best Cinema Audio-Visual: *Lupang Hinirang of National Bookstore/ NCAA/ Haribon by Creative Source Inc.;* Best Public Service Radio: *Count & Usaping Bata of PGH 911 by TBWA/Santiago Mangada Puno, Empty House & Muscle Man of KBP/National Bookstore by Creative Source Inc., Walang Hihingi sa mga Kandidato of Anti-Corruption Movement by Jesuit Communications Foundation Inc., MM Tango by ABS-CBN Creative Communications Mgnt. Division;* Best Branded Print Ad: *Mother's Day/Father's day/Grandparent's Day of Globe & Knock of Pioneer by McCann Erickson Phils., Gift of a Greener Future of PNOC-EDC by Design One Asia Phil. Corp., Life of Seafood Delicacy, Power to Generate Contentment, Nature's Breakwater, Gigantic Water Filter, Power to Generate Life by Mirant Phils. Corp.,* Best Public Service Print Ad: *Birth by iLeo Inc., Peter & Jesus of Holy Apostles Senior Seminary by Ace Saatchi & Saatchi, Voter's Prayer of PPCRV & Bra of Manila Bulletin both by DDB Phils., Footspa of Caritas by Ace Saatchi & Saatchi, Damaged Goods of Rotary Club of Manila & Toilet of Gabriela both by AB Communications Inc., Textbook Count of DepEd by Campaigns & Grey;* Best Branded TV Ad: *Fresh Start & Evolution of Globe Telecom by McCann Erickson Phils., Proud to be Pinoy of Beam by Creative Source Inc., Diwata of Fita by Lowe Inc., Teleserye of Communications Inc., Walang Hihingi sa Kandidato of Anti-Corruption Movement by Jesuit Communications Foundation Inc., Fashionista of KBP/National Boosktore by Creative Source Inc., Holy Week Campaign 2003 of Studio 23 by ABS-CBN Creative On Air, Invest of SEC by Ace Saatchi & Saatchi, Mothers by TBWA/Santiago Mangada Puno.*

TELEVISION

Best Adult Educational Program: *Biyaheng Langit of HIP TV/RPN 9, A Night at the Cathedral of ABC 5, Good Take of IBC 13, Kay Susan Tayo & Pet.Ko of GMA 7;* Best Business News or Feature: *Entrepinoy of IBC 13, The Morning Show of ABS-CBN Bacolod, Kumikitang Kabuhayan of ABS-CBN 2, Business Nightly of ABS-CBN News Channel, Magandang Morning Phils. Of RPN 9;* Best Children's Program: *Sineskwela & Detek Kids of ABS-CBN 2;* Best Comedy Program: *Idol Ko si Kap & All Together Now of GMA 7, Ang Tanging Ina & Home Along Da Airport of ABS-CBN 2;* Best Drama Series: *Marina of ABS-CBN 2, Te Amo, Narito ang Puso Ko & Hanggang Kailan of GMA 7;* Best Drama Program: *Walang Bakas & Magpakailanman of GMA 7, Kapag May Katwiran, Ipaglaban Mo of RPN 9, Mga Eva Karon of ABS-CBN Mandaue;* Best TV Documentary: *Asin at Liwanag, Tinapay at Alak by Jesuit Communications/NBN 4, I-Witness of GMA 7, Heal for Peace of ANC 21;* Best Entertainment Program: *Light, Love, Life at the Cathedral & Extra Challenge of GMA 7, A Night at the Cathedral of ABC 5;* Best News Magazine: *Kasangga mo ang Langit of HIP TV Inc./RPN 9, Jessica Soho Reports of GMA 7, Pipol & Magandang Umaga Bayan of ABS-CBN 2, Balitang Middle East of ABS-CBN News Channel/TFC, Overseas Pinoy TV of Wall City Entertainment/RPN9;* Best News Program: *TV Patrol of ABS-CBN 2, TV Patrol Iloilo of ABS-CBN Iloilo, 24 Oras & Saksi, Liga ng Katotohanan of GMA 7;* Best Public Service Program: *Children's Village of ABS-CBN News Channel, Imbestigador & Wish Ko Lang of GMA 7, Brigada Eskuela of ABS-CBN News Channel & ABC 5;* Best Special Event Coverage: *Bayaning Pilipino Gawad 2003 of ABS-CBN 2, A Night at the Cathedral of ABC 5, Hiyas ng Quezon: Pahiyas 2003 & Historia de Nueva Caceres: A Peñafrancia Special 2003 of ABS-CBN Naga;* Best Talk Show: *A Second Look of RPN 9, Get Real with Ces, Straight Talk & Talk Back with Tina of ABS-CBN News Channel, Debate with Mare & Pare, Celebrity Turns & Partners Mel & Jay of GMA 7, Feel At Home with Charlene of ABS-CBN 2, Kumusta Kabayan of ABS-CBN News Channel/TFC;* Best Sports Show: *2003 UAAP Cheerdancing Competition & 2003 UAAP Finals-FEU vs. ADMU of ABS-CBN Studio 23, Sports Unlimited of ABS-CBN 2;* Best Special Feature: *The Columbia TV Study "Akala Mo" of Southeast Asian Foundation for Children's TV, Seven Last Words of RPN 9.*

MUSIC

Best Music Video: *Paghahandog by Jesuit Communications Inc., Brigada Eskuela by DECS, Kapuso Christmas ID/Pasko ng Kapuso by GMA 7, Sabay Tayo Pilipinas by ABS-CBN:* Best Album: *The Sacred Works of Ryan Cayabyab by SMFPA/BMG Records, Let Your Praise Be Heard by Jesuit Communications Inc., Awit ng Panginoon by Ateneo Chamber Singers, The Mysteries of Light & A Heart's Journey by Universal Records Inc., Uyayi:A Collection of Phil. Lullabies by Chin-chin Gutierrez, Lagi Kitang Mamahalin by Viva Records Corp.*

CINEMA

Best Film Nominees: *Mano Po 2 by Regal Entertainment Inc., Crying Ladies by Unitel Pictures, Filipinas by Viva Films, Sa Kandungan ng Langit by White Window Film Prod.*

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Fee pull power

BREAKTIME

Conrado R. Banal III

WHY ARE they not also throwing street parties—those officially known as "people power" in media—for the big shots of the bleeding GOCCs?

As you know, "GOCC" is media's term of endearment for those corpulent "government-owned or -controlled corporations."

They are the rage in media nowadays, simply by effortlessly losing hundreds of billions of pesos of our tax money every year.

Only the head of the Government Service Insurance System, or GSIS, the pension fund of government workers, is enjoying such a special treat from his own people. Hmm.

There must be something more in the media troubles of GSIS CEO and president Winston Garcia than meets the retina.

* * *

IT MUST be more than just his famous poor PR, for example, when he deals with politicos, or his amazing lack of people skills, when it comes to GSIS employees.

So why is Garcia being singled out among the GOCC heads? Is it just about his housing and car loans, or the "favoritism" or "patron" system in the GSIS promotion?

GSIS may be the only pension fund in the whole world which refuses to invest in the stock market—doing great today, by the way. But GSIS still does well financially.

The fact of the matter is, under Garcia, the GSIS social insurance fund posted a P36-billion net income last year. That's an increase of P6 billion in one year!

At any rate, this is no longer just about bad PR or poor human relations, the curse of many cerebral executives who just cannot stand the folly of their lowlife underlings.

In my book, the leading candidate behind an obviously orchestrated campaign on all fronts to oust Garcia, must have something to do with the reinsurance business.

* * *

SOMETIME ago, Garcia also had to fend off a similar campaign. It was an out and out attack from the executives of the state-owned—and bankrupt—Napocor.

It happened at the start of this cute administration. At stake then was the insurance cover for Napocor assets, which amounted to $25 million a year.

Under the law, Napocor and, for that matter, the entire government, must course all their insurance needs through the GSIS.

That's big money for GSIS, but it also means big risks. Thus GSIS tries to pass on the risk through "reinsurance," which it mostly does abroad.

No wonder, in the local insurance scene, the "reinsurance" business of GSIS is to die for, even if only for the broker's fee, which amounts to hundreds of millions.

* * *

WHEN Garcia took the helm of GSIS, he immediately changed the broker for the Napocor insurance cover. He brought down the cost to $14 million a year.

That meant, for Napocor alone, savings of over half a billion pesos! Every year! And that's also savings from out of our tax money!

This "people power" against Garcia, in other words, smells of a fee-based attempt to pull off one more heist on the public. What do you call it again—"fee pull power?"

And so I can only surmise that, for the Napocor insurance cover alone, some people were making an obscene amount of money before—under the table, of course.

Now, who were the previous heads of Napocor and of GSIS again? I thought they ought to be investigated instead.

* * *

BUT the point is, this bungling pathetic campaign to oust Garcia, is not dissimilar to what happened in SSS a few years ago. They also ousted the boss through "people power."

In the GSIS scene, nevertheless, some GSIS employees were so mad at Garcia, you could see a spur-of-the-moment outpouring of tetra-pack synthetic juice.

I mean, where's the spontaneity of it all? We know that a lot of "outsiders" manned the picket lines at the GSIS, mostly for the benefit of TV cameras.

Sure, the hiring and promotion of personnel in GSIS is the same patronage system at work in other government offices. Newly hired relatives of politicians are promoted too fast, even bypassing dozens of career employees.

It seems that members of the GSIS board of trustees can also put their own people in high positions, as if they have a yearly quota for new hires—highly paid, at that.

Garcia tries but still can't stop it. Members of the board can always point to his bad example. Well, his chief of staff is his sister. This creates a lot of intrigue.

Understandably, for all executives, chief of staff is a position of trust. I too would want somebody in that position who will die for me. Or just to watch my back!

* * *

NOW the pride and joy of Garcia, based on reports, is the new "e-card" system of GSIS. It allows the roughly 1.5 million members to get their benefits through bank ATMs.

It can also pay for their bills, serve as a debit (as against "credit") card, or become their ATM card. It does all the things which the plastic card can do, including picking your teeth with it.

Now the e-card system is a joint undertaking between GSIS and Union Bank. This happens to be owned by the Aboitiz group. It also happens to be based in Cebu.

In Garcia's own words, the bank also benefits from the system. Immediately, it has a 1.5-million membership base for cardholders.

For its part, GSIS saves on the processing of payments to members. Every year, it spends P250 million for check printing and distribution alone.

It spends only P25 each for the e-cards. The cards will cost less than P50 million for all the members. It is also just a one-time expense. Well, assuming of course that the members do not pick their teeth too much with it!

* * *

REPORTS said that San Miguel chair and CEO Eduardo "Danding" Cojuangco Jr. was selling his interest in the company to First Pacific, the Hong Kong-based firm of Manny Pangilinan, chair and CEO of PLDT. Really?

Even granting that First Pacific can always borrow money to buy out Danding, I don't know if Danding is dying to sell his interest in the country's biggest food business.

Under Danding in the past six years or so, San Miguel has been investing like crazy both here and abroad.

It is one of only three local groups which invested aggressively here in the past years. The other two were Ayala and SM.

Moreover, Danding positioned San Miguel to become the biggest buyer of agriculture products this country has ever known.

And then there's the question of ownership of more than 40 percent of San Miguel, involving Danding and the government. This is far from being resolved.

Earlier, Manny Pangilinan tried to acquire San Miguel, with a little help from the administration of Kuya Eddie. The deal fell through, because Kuya Eddie did not want to rock the boat, so to speak. And so Manny went for PLDT.

But the court already ruled that nobody, not even Danding himself, can touch the disputed shares in San Miguel.

If this cute administration can fix the sale of Danding's interest, as reported, it is like saying that Gloriaetta can also, er, "fix" the decision of the courts.

GSIS seen to retain SMC seat for now

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

THE GOVERNMENT Service Insurance System is keeping its board seat in food and beverage giant San Miguel Corp., said a ranking official of the pension fund.

But if the price is right, the pension fund may consider selling its stake, the GSIS official added.

GSIS maintains one board seat in SMC, roughly controlling 12 percent of the food and beverage firm. According to the GSIS official, the state fund regularly trades SMC shares, as well as other blue-chip stocks, for its investment account.

The INQUIRER earlier reported that GSIS was selling its stake in SMC to the SMC Retirement Fund.

The GSIS declined to comment on the recent stock market deals brokered by ABN Amro Securities.

Two market magnates—telecom executive Manuel Pangilinan and mall tycoon Henry Sy—also recently denied being involved in the reported P5.4-billion sale of SMC shares in the stock market last week.

Analysts estimated that the total deal involved roughly 2.9 percent of SMC's total outstanding shares.

Local think tank Team Research Inc. said the SMC shares sold are not enough for one board seat since a board seat would represent roughly 6.7 percent in SMC.

"Next to the Presidential Commission on Good Government and the government pension funds, SMC's retirement fund holds the biggest block of SMC shares," the research firm said. "We surmised that it could either be the retirement fund or one of the government pension funds (that figured in the sale) of SMC shares."

The PCGG shares (roughly 26 percent) as well as the 20 percent stake of SMC chair Eduardo Cojuangco Jr. cannot be sold until the local courts has ruled on the ownership of these shares.

Other shareholders are Japan's Kirin Brewery with 15 percent, SM Investments Corp. (SMIC) the private holding firm of the Sy family at between 6 and 7 percent, and the Social Security System (SSS) at 12 percent. The rest are in the hands of the public.

RP firms rake in $3M in Dubai furniture expo

By Abigail L. Ho

ELEVEN local furniture firms made a killing at the Middle East furniture exhibition INDEX 2004, raking in almost $3 million in sales.

This year's performance topped last year's sales earnings of $2.76 million, according to the Department of Trade and Industry.

Exhibit participants from the Philippines registered $1.17 million in booked orders and another $1.74 million in negotiated sales, the DTI yesterday said in a statement.

"We find INDEX a good opportunity for Philippine exporters to position their products in the Middle East market," Trade Secretary Cesar Purisima said. "The buyer inquiries and negotiated sales ... demonstrate what we can offer to the furniture and construction industry in Dubai."

The participating companies were Rattan Pacifica Inc., Stoneworld Impex Inc., VEII Export Inc., Padua International Corp,, Saga Designs, Scherer Jardin Plants, Filipinas Fair Trade Ventures, Angel Whispers Gifts and Crafts, Teresa Marble Corp., YYD System Interiors Inc. and Shelmed Cottage Treasures.

Modern furniture maker Padua International cornered $1 million worth of orders in the exhibition—the most that any of the participating Philippine firms chalked up.

Orders came mostly from high-end hotels, villas and condominiums that were mostly owned by Dubai's ruling family. Renowned real estate developers in Abu Dhabi and buyers from Bahrain and Iran also put in a significant volume of orders.

The 11 local firms, together with 1,370 others from 52 countries, showcased the latest developments and trends in the furnishing sector.

The Philippine firms used a "total solutions package" in marketing their wares—giving exhibit attendees a glimpse of Philippine exports, composed of both actual home furnishings and construction materials.

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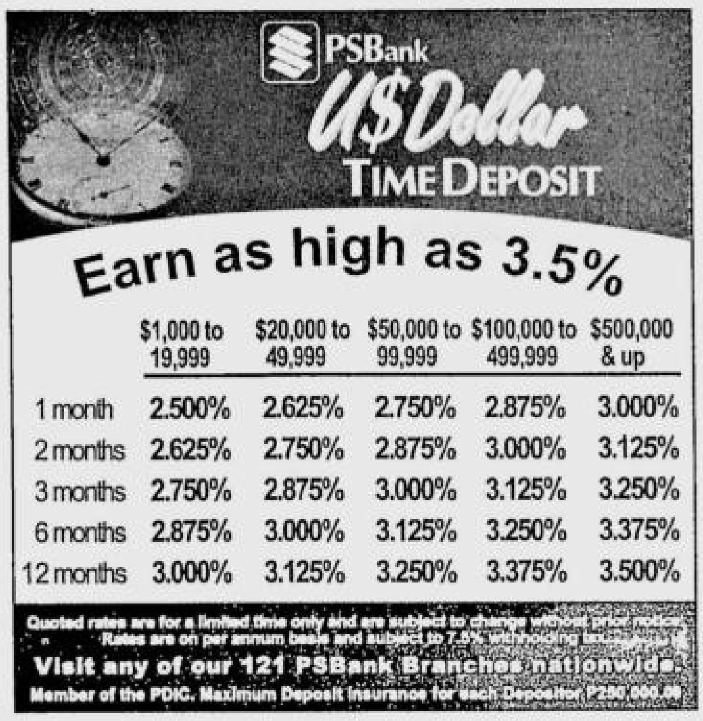

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3 months	2.750%	2.875%	3.000%	3.125%	3.250%
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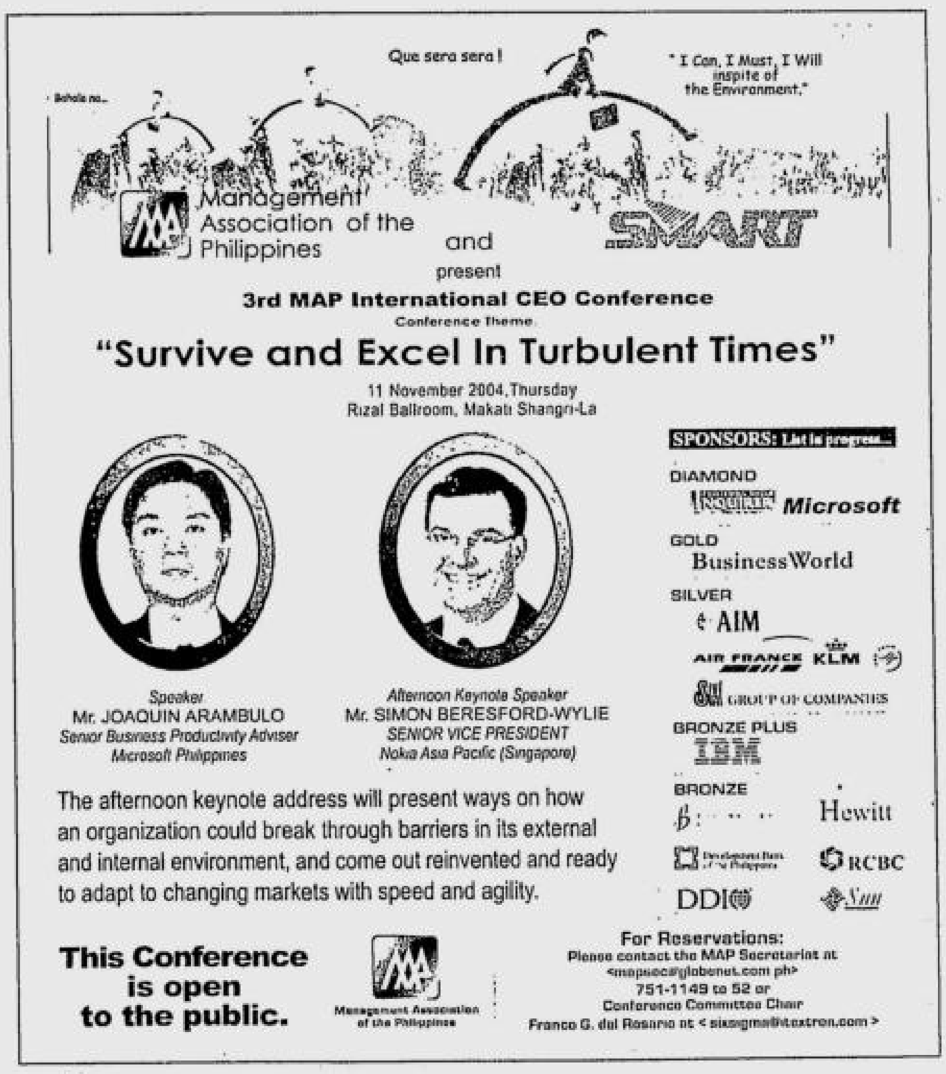

Management Association of the Philippines and SMART present
3rd MAP International CEO Conference
Conference Theme
"Survive and Excel In Turbulent Times"
11 November 2004, Thursday
Rizal Ballroom, Makati Shangri-La

Speaker
Mr. JOAQUIN ARAMBULO
Senior Business Productivity Adviser
Microsoft Philippines

Afternoon Keynote Speaker
Mr. SIMON BERESFORD-WYLIE
SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT
Nokia Asia Pacific (Singapore)

The afternoon keynote address will present ways on how an organization could break through barriers in its external and internal environment, and come out reinvented and ready to adapt to changing markets with speed and agility.

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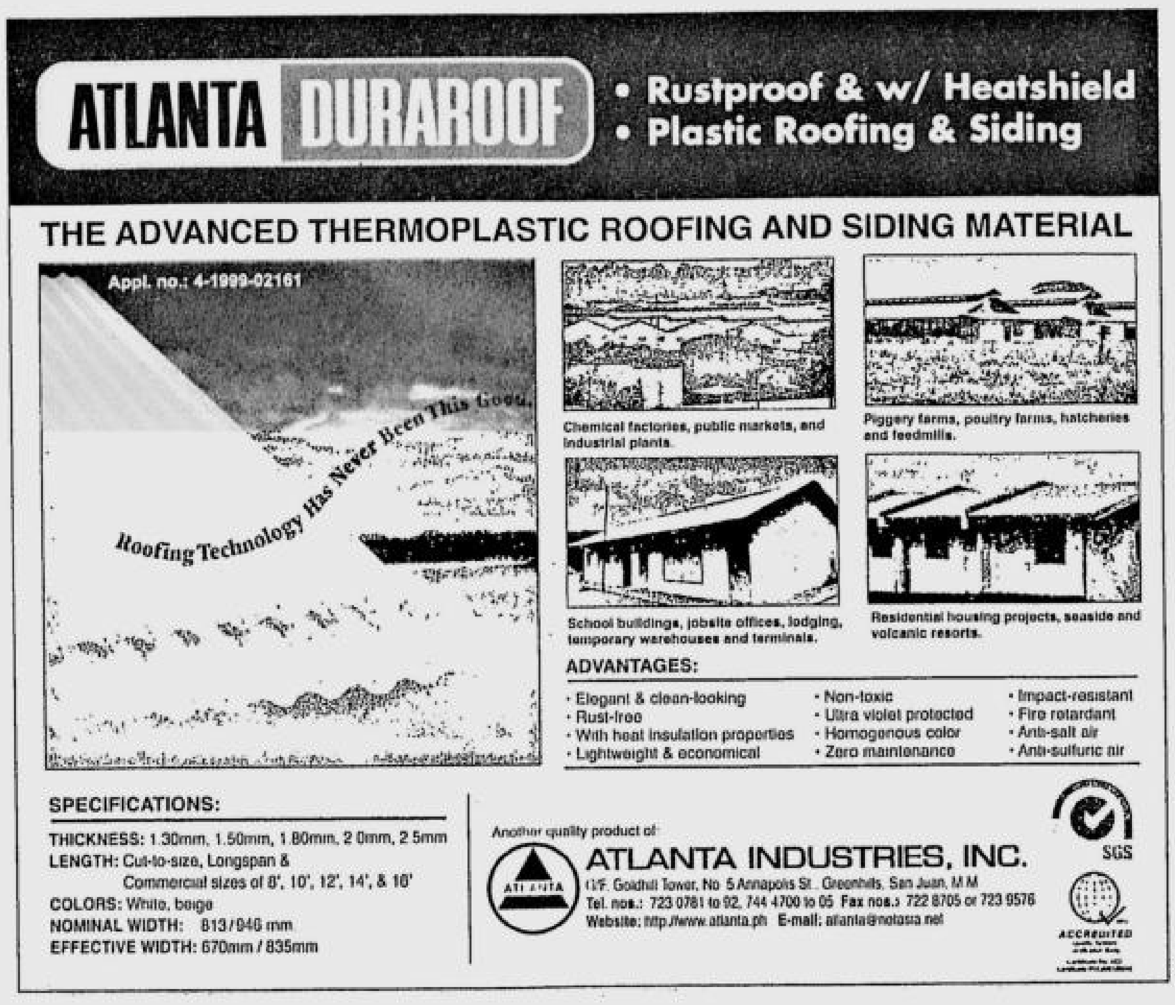
Que sera sera!
" I Can, I Must, I Will inspite of the Environment."



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MR. BEARBULL

Ron Nathan

DID YOU watch the debate between President Bush and John Kerry? It was incredible, Kerry asked Bush how he would bring down the price of a barrel of oil. After a moment's thought, Bush said, "I would produce smaller barrels."

The new starting price of a taxi meter is being increased from P25 to P30. Somebody once wrote that the only things in life that were certain were death and taxis.

The President chartered a plane to take her entire family to Brunei to attend a wedding. She reiterated her austerity program saying, "There are no sacred cows except in India."

I have been surfing the Internet to read about the 3 physicists who won the Nobel Prize with their Theory of Everything, known as TOE for short. This brings me back to the ongoing saga of my toe. I went to the hospital and asked to see a podiatrist (foot doctor), but they referred me to a pediatrician who had little patients. Finally, I was sent to an orthopedic hospital.

Doctor SEUSS looked at my swollen toe and said that the nerve had been damaged and he would have to remove it surgically. He suggested a toe transplant. Instead, I had a metatarsal pad made for both feet. This is simply an arch support, worn by Archbishops, but it is rather uncomfortable. However, the manufacturer assured me I would get used to it. I have to follow a special diet that excluded anything to do with toes, so no tomatoes or potatoes, otherwise I might become comatose.

My wife spent a week in the gym weightlifting, and then decided to massage my throbbing toe with her miracle oil. She bought this 4 years ago in a shop selling religious icons and apparently, it was blessed by RASPUTIN. It cures cancer, AIDS, heart disease, Alzheimer's and 96 other diseases. It is also good for bicycles and sewing machines.

Grabbing my aching toe, she proceeded to squeeze it with all her might while pretending to massage it. As I lay on the bed yelling, my 7-year-old daughter laughed hysterically at my agonized contortions. My wife kept this up for 20 minutes, smiling all the time. After it was over, she said, "I haven't had such a good time since before I met you."

I forgave my daughter because she wrote to Santa Claus asking him to bring her Daddy a new toe, one that doesn't hurt. Toe be continued.

* * *

The news from America is not very good. The number of new jobs created in September fell from 148,000 in August to only 96,000; more ammunition for Kerry when they debate the economy next week. Meanwhile, the price of a barrel of oil has now passed the $53 mark. In the winter, December to February, the temperature in Europe, Japan and much of North America falls below zero and all the homes will have their oil-fired central heating turned on 24 hours a day. So you can expect oil prices to go higher still.

Our inflation rate of almost 7 percent is extremely high by world standards and the central bank might have to let rates rise next year. Standard & Poor's has signaled clear and present danger of a downgrade from stable to negative if no tax-raising bills are passed in the next session. Rep. Joey Salceda has prepared a detailed timetable of bills to be passed in 2004/2006 but there is no guarantee that the Senate will go along with it.

The character of the stock market has changed in the last few days. It is no longer an up-market but a features market instead. For example, DGTL has risen from 63 centavos to P1.70 in a month because of its unlimited call and text promo. This is only from SUN to SUN but appears to be going very well, judging by the share price. There is a yet no indication as to whether this is of limited duration or will be made permanent.

If it is only until the year ends, then cell phone users will probably revert to SMART, GLOBE and PILTEL as they have more features. But if it becomes permanent, then the low-end of all 3 mobile-phone companies will be affected. The one likely to suffer most is Talk 'N Text as it is the low-end of SMART.

The CEO of PLTL recently reduced his profit forecast from P1.4 billion to P1.1 to P1.2 billion because of the weak peso. With this unexpected competition, profits might be lower still. Earlier in the year, I recommended PLTL at P1.88 but now, in view of the uncertainty, I suggest you take your profit. The closing price of P2.65 gives you a gain of nearly 50 percent.

Another interesting stock is MPC, which rose from 30 centavos to 50-60 centavos. At that point, Credit Lyonnais (CLSA) started selling vast amounts of stock, up to 78 million shares a day. They have been selling non-stop for 3 weeks and have unloaded over 600 million shares. Local brokers are buying heavily so they know something, or think they do.

MPC has a checkered history and its book value is only 1 centavo because it had to dispose of nearly all its assets to pay off its debts. This it has done and investors are now pinning their hopes that Manny Panganiban will resuscitate the company as he did with PLTL. The head of MPC, Jose Lim, has become COO of Citra so there is no doubt that both companies are going ahead with the toll road.

First Pacific will presumably provide the P12.5 billion as it is beyond the resources of MPC in its present state. Even if the money is forthcoming, we do not know what percentage of the venture will be owned by MPC, the date of commencement, the amount of revenue which will accrue in due course, or the net profit attributable to MPC after paying interest. So it is impossible to pass judgment on the share price. But can all the local brokers be wrong?

Lastly, the price of UCC has scarcely moved due to continued selling by ING. The only fresh news that I have is that there will be a shareholders' meeting on Nov. 3. Presumably, this is to announce the company's change of name to Holcim (Philippines) by December. Hopefully, they will also announce their plans for the company but this might be deferred until the end of the year.

The third-quarter figures are usually the worst because it covers the rainy season when construction is at its lowest. However, one of its main competitors had its factory closed down for 6 weeks pending an investigation into the quality of its cement. The factory has just started production again but UCC will have had the benefit of their lost orders.

Some institution are asking the PSE to reconsider its decision not to enforce the Tender Offer Act because Cemco acquired 51 percent of UCC by buying UCMC, a holding company that owned the UCC shares. As I wrote last week, ethically and morally they have a good case, but legally the PSE is correct and unlikely to reverse its decision. Unfortunately, this creates such an obvious loophole that all future bidders will take advantage of it. *mrbearbull@hotmail.com*

IMF expects export growth to slow down to 6.7% in 2005

By Doris C. Dumlao

THE INTERNATIONAL Monetary Fund expects the country's exports earnings to grow by 7.4 percent this year, short of the government's fighting target of 10 percent.

A recently released IMF report indicated that growth in export revenues would further slow down next year to 6.7 percent, while imports would likely ease from 10 percent this year to 7.3 percent in 2005.

This slowdown in exports is tied to the performance of the global economy, which in turn is seen being adversely affected by the upsurge in global oil prices and interest rates.

Philippine exports from January to August this year were up 8.5 percent as earnings rose by 13.7 percent in August due to a rebound in electronic shipments.

Despite the expected slowdown, the country's export growth is still much better than the 2.7 percent expansion in 2003.

The slowdown is seen to trim the country's current account as a percentage of gross domestic product from 4.9 percent last year to 2.8 percent this year and further to 2 percent next year.

The current account, a key component of the balance of payments, records trade in goods and services as well as transfers while the capital and financial account records loan transactions, investment flows, short-term capital and other related items.

The BOP measures the foreign exchange transactions between the economy and the rest of the world. Any transaction which gives rise to a payment by a Philippine resident like importation or offshore investment is a deficit item while any transaction which gives rise to a receipt like exporting or inward remittance and investment is a surplus item.

Based on the IMF's projections, the Philippines will post a BOP deficit of $600 million this year, but will rebound next year with a surplus of $700 million.

The fund expects the country's capital and financial account to post a deficit of $500 million this year, but a surplus of $1.3 billion in 2005.

As a percentage of exports, the country's debt service ratio is seen to improve from 20.8 percent in 2003 to 21.9 percent this year and further to 22.8 percent next year.

The IMF already expects the Philippines to post the slowest economic growth and highest inflation rate in Southeast Asia.

CAP plans capital hike to ₱6.2B

By Elizabeth L. Sanchez

PRE-NEED giant College Assurance Plan Philippines Inc. is planning to increase its capital to at least P6.2 billion to cover for additional shares to be issued to its local investor, CAP first vice-president Bobby Café said.

Its existing authorized capital stands at P200 to P300 million.

CAP has yet to file its application to increase its capital with the Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) within the month.

Two firms, Green Circle and Greensquare Property Corp., earlier agreed to subscribe to P6 billion worth of shares in CAP.

As part of the share-swap agreement, Greensquare and Green Circle will transfer titles to pieces of property to CAP to be added as trust fund assets of the pre-need firm.

Both property firms are linked to businessman-banker Romeo Roxas, a close friend of the Sobrepeñas, the family that controls a majority stake in CAP.

Roxas is the president of Greensquare Property and a director of Philippine Veterans Bank who was identified by the company as having participated in the search for an investor in CAP.

The pieces of property to be infused were initially valued at between P3 billion and P6 billion and will be swapped for preferred shares or non-voting shares, which get the first crack at company dividends. The shares are supposed to carry an option to get converted into common shares or voting shares after a certain period, based on the initial agreement between CAP and the investor.

CAP will also ask the Bureau of Internal Revenue (BIR) to exempt it from documentary stamp taxes related to the transfer of the property.

Café also said that CAP expected to draw on a $127-million loan from a foreign fund in installments. It will initially draw down $27 million this month. CAP is studying a five-year drawdown period for the loan.

Café also said that CAP plans to propose private sector nominees to an SEC oversight board, which will check on the company's compliance with regulations and its activities.

Instead of a board that is made up largely of SEC auditors, CAP wanted private sector members who are more knowledgeable about running a pre-need firm. It will suggest former Social Security System (SSS) chair Renato Valencia and Roxas as possible members.

MPC considers Nenaco delisting

METRO PACIFIC Corp., the local holding company of Hong Kong conglomerate First Pacific Co., is considering the delisting of its troubled inter-island shipping firm Negros Navigation Co. (Nenaco) from the Philippine Stock Exchange (PSE).

MPC vice-president David Nugent told the INQUIRER that this would give Nenaco the flexibility to fully implement its rehabilitation plan.

Once approved, MPC would have to file a notice to conduct a tender offer to buy the shares of minority shareholders in Nenaco.

MPC owns 97.2 percent of Nenaco, which was listed on the PSE on June 21, 1994.

Nugent said MPC has yet to secure board approvals for the proposal and for the filing of its tender offer.

In a related development, Nenaco is electing three new members to its 13-member board representing creditors to comply with a court order.

Nominated to the board were Development Bank of the Philippines (DBP) senior vice-president Renato Castillo, Shell Petroleum Corp.'s Wellington Aldemita and unsecured creditor Unique Machine Shop lawyer Arlyn Soresca.

Elizabeth L. Sanchez

Stocks slump on impact of surging oil prices

STOCKS fell yesterday, led by telecom stocks such as PLDT, due to worries over the effect of high oil prices on the country.

Investors in the Philippines, which imports most of its crude supplies, have been cautious since US oil prices hit new highs last week. Crude traded above $53 a barrel again yesterday.

Manila's main stock index closed 0.79 percent lower, down 14.50 points to 1,821.97 points. It has still gained 26.3 percent this year, making it one of the region's top performers.

"Rising crude prices continue to worry investors because it's been weighing on the peso," Joseph Roxas, president at Eagle Equities, said.

Roxas said he expected the main index to find immediate support at 1,800 points in the next few days.

Rising global interest rates and higher oil prices were listed as risk factors by ratings agency Standard & Poor's, which said last week the Philippines' credit ratings could come under pressure due to slow progress on containing its huge fiscal deficit.

Traders took in their stride news the Philippines has revised out its target of a balanced government budget by a year to 2010.

The 2010 target was more realistic, one trader said.

Shares in Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., the country's dominant phone company, fell 0.34 percent to P1,480.

Second-ranked Globe Telecom, jointly owned by conglomerate Ayala Corp. and Singapore Telecommunications, fell 2.69 percent to P1,085.

Third-ranked Digital Telecommunications Inc. tumbled 12.35 percent to P1.42.

Turnover yesterday was P880.98 million, down from P1.1 billion on Friday. Losers swamped gainers at 60 versus 20 and there were 55 stocks unchanged. *Reuters*

PHILIPPINE STOCK EXCHANGE

(As of October 11, 2004)

STOCKS	OPEN	HIGH	LOW	CLOSE	VOLUME
BANKS & FINANCIAL SERVICES					
BANKS					
Banco de Oro Univ. Bank	19	19.25	19	19	281,000
Bank of the Phil. Islands	47.5	48	47.5	48	1,985,300
China Banking Corp.	530	530	530	530	3,060
Equitable PCI Bank Inc.	43	44	43	44	35,000
Export and Ind. Bank Inc.	0.43	0.43	0.43	0.43	100,000
Metropolitan Bank & Trust	28	28.5	28	28	68,900
Prudential Bank	420	420	420	420	20
Philippine National Bank	23.25	23.25	23.25	23.25	5,000
Rizal Comm. Banking Corp.	13	13	12.75	13	6,200
Security Bank Corp.	21	21	20.5	21	49,500
Union Bank of the Phil.	23.75	23.75	23.75	23.75	20,000
FINANCIAL SERVICES					
Bankard Inc.	0.93	0.93	0.93	0.93	300,000
Manulife Financial Corp.	2470	2470	2470	2470	980
PCI Leasing & Fin. Inc.	1.36	1.36	1.36	1.36	200,000
Sun Life Financial Inc.	1675	1685	1675	1685	1,180
COMMERCIAL & INDUSTRIAL					
COMMUNICATION					
Digital Telecom Phils Inc.	1.58	1.58	1.38	1.42	78,613,000
Globe Telecom Inc.	1115	1115	1080	1085	70,050
Ipeople Inc.	1.72	1.76	1.7	1.7	205,000
Island Info and Tech Inc.	0.05	0.05	0.05	0.05	1,500,000
ISM Communications Corp.	0.04	0.041	0.039	0.04	1,379,700,000
Liberty Telecoms Holdings	0.51	0.6	0.51	0.54	2,610,000
Pilipino Tel. Corp.	2.7	2.75	2.6	2.65	3,788,000
Phil. Telegraph & Tel. Co	0.5	0.5	0.42	0.42	720,000
Phil. Long Dis Tel Co.	1485	1485	1475	1480	92,720
Ivantage Corp.	0.73	0.75	0.71	0.71	10,180,000
Philweb Corp.	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.013	154,500,000
POWER & ENERGY					
Manila Electric Co. A	16	16	15.75	15.75	33,300
Manila Electric Co. B	24.75	24.75	24.25	24.5	226,400
Petron Corp.	2.9	2.9	2.8	2.85	961,000
Salcon Power Corp.	2.26	2.26	2.26	2.26	5,000
Trans-Asia Oil and Energy	1.1	1.1	1.08	1.08	612,000
TRANSPORTATION SERVICES					
Asian Terminals Inc.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	20,000
Int'l Container Term'l Sv	5.1	5.1	5	5.1	33,000
Lorenzo Shipping Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.58	0.58	110,000
CONSTRUCTION & OTHER RELATED PRODUCTS					
Engineering Equip. Inc.	0.41	0.41	0.39	0.39	1,240,000
Republic Glass Hldg. Corp.	1.72	1.72	1.72	1.72	25,000
Union Cement Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.46	2.48	810,000
FOOD, BEVERAGES & TOBACCO					
Alaska Milk Corp.	3.15	3.15	3.15	3.15	6,025,000
Ginebra San Miguel Inc.	30	30	30	30	11,300
Jollibee Foods Corp.	28	28	28	28	126,800
RFM Corp.	0.73	0.73	0.72	0.72	200,000
Swift Food Inc.	0.35	0.35	0.35	0.35	20,000
San Miguel Corp. A	58	58.5	58	58.5	52,500
San Miguel Corp. B	73	73	72.5	73	76,500
Universal Robina Corp.	9.8	9.8	9.8	9.8	100,000
Vitarich Corp.	0.29	0.29	0.29	0.29	200,000
HOLDING FIRMS					
Abacus Con Res & Hdg A	0.0042	0.0042	0.004	0.004	12,000,000
Abacus Con Res & Hdg B	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	0.0044	1,000,000
Ayala Corp.	6.4	6.4	6.3	6.4	5,280,000
Alsons Cons. Res. Inc.	0.3	0.35	0.3	0.35	20,000
Aboitiz Equity Ventures	3.45	3.55	3.45	3.55	2,314,000
Ajo.Net Holdings Inc.	0.031	0.031	0.031	0.031	6,000,000
A. Soriano Corp.	1.4	1.4	1.4	1.4	750,000
APC Group Inc.	0.07	0.07	0.07	0.07	100,000
Alcorn Gold Res. Corp.	0.007	0.007	0.007	0.007	44,000,000
Anglo Phil Holdings Corp.	0.29	0.3	0.28	0.3	530,000
ATN Holdings Inc.	1.8	1.8	1.8	1.8	20,000
Boulevard Holdings Inc.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	30,000
Benpres Holdings Corp.	0.58	0.58	0.55	0.56	7,510,000
A Brown Company Inc.	0.46	0.46	0.46	0.46	10,000
Basic Consolidated Inc.	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	3,330,000
Crown Equities Inc.	0.28	0.28	0.26	0.26	9,250,000
Southeast Asian Cement	0.145	0.145	0.14	0.14	630,000
DMCI Holdings Inc.	2.75	2.8	2.46	2.46	6,295,000
Ever-Gotesco Resources	0.034	0.034	0.034	0.034	2,000,000
Filinvest Dev. Corp.	1	1	1	1	80,000
Fil-Hispano Holdings Corp.	4.1	4.1	4.05	4.05	28,000
First Phil Hldgs Corp.	27.5	27.5	27	27	377,100
Global Equities Inc.	0.0725	0.0725	0.0675	0.07	2,000,000
House Of Investments Inc.	0.7	0.7	0.7	0.7	600,000
Ionics Inc.	1.98	1.98	1.88	1.88	380,000
J.G. Summit Holdings Inc.	2.3	2.4	2.3	2.3	368,000
Macroasia Corp.	1.48	1.48	1.48	1.48	13,000
Megaworld Corp.	1.32	1.32	1.26	1.28	3,040,000
Multitech Inv. Corp.	0.68	0.69	0.42	0.42	1,590,000
Metro Pacific Corp.	0.57	0.58	0.52	0.52	166,040,000
Prime Orion Phils. Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.155	0.155	400,000
Prime Media Holdings Inc.	1.04	1.06	1.04	1.04	238,000
East Asia Power Res. Corp.	0.135	0.135	0.135	0.135	300,000
Solid Group Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.38	0.39	610,000
Uniwide Holdings Inc.	0.16	0.16	0.155	0.155	5,340,000
Wellex Industries Inc.	0.235	0.235	0.235	0.235	210,000
Waterfront Phils. Inc.	0.24	0.245	0.225	0.225	890,000
MANUFACTURING, DISTRIBUTION & TRADING					
Music Semiconductors Corp.	1.76	1.84	1.76	1.8	738,000
Mabuhay Vinyl Corp.	1	1	1	1	37,000
Picop Resources Inc.	0.065	0.065	0.065	0.065	100,000
Steniel Manufacturing	0.15	0.15	0.15	0.15	50,000
HOTEL, RECREATION & OTHER SERVICES					
Belle Corp.	0.7	0.7	0.68	0.68	1,420,000
Fairmont Holdings Inc.	1.4	1.56	1.02	1.1	30,783,000
Leisure & Resorts Corp.	0.88	0.88	0.65	0.7	6,910,000
Manila Jockey Club	3	3	3	3	81,000
Premiere Ent. Prod. Inc.	0.39	0.39	0.33	0.33	6,220,000
Philippine Racing Club	3.2	3.2	3.2	3.2	20,000
BONDS, PREFERRED & WARRANTS					
ABS-CBN Hldgs. Corp. (Pdr)	22.25	22.25	22	22.25	88,200
PLDT (10% Pref) Series L	10	10	10	10	1,000
PLDT (10% Pref) Series P	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,500
PLDT (10% Pref) Series Q	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	700
PLDT (10% Pref) Series S	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	1,900
PLDT (10% Pref.) Series U	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT (10% Pref) Series W	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
PLDT 10% Pref Series Aa	10.5	10.5	10.5	10.5	100
OTHERS					
Centro Escolar University	6.5	6.5	6.5	6.5	11,000
PROPERTY					
Ayala Land Inc.	6.8	6.8	6.8	6.8	1,120,000
Cebu Holdings Inc.	0.52	0.52	0.51	0.51	470,000
C & P Homes Inc.	0.44	0.44	0.41	0.41	9,810,000
Cyber Bay Corp.	0.155	0.155	0.145	0.145	2,750,000
Empire East Land Inc.	0.41	0.42	0.39	0.39	29,850,000
Filinvest Land Inc.	1.16	1.16	1.12	1.12	3,004,000
Kuok Phil. Properties	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	240,000
Fil-Estate Land Inc.	0.55	0.55	0.53	0.53	5,690,000
MRC Allied Ind. Inc.	0.12	0.12	0.12	0.12	100,000
Robinsons Land Corp.	2.2	2.2	2.16	2.16	244,000
SM Development Corp.	1.08	1.08	1.06	1.06	67,000
SM Prime Holdings Inc.	6.7	6.7	6.6	6.7	6,288,000
MINING					
Abra Mining & Industrial	0.006	0.006	0.006	0.006	74,000,000
Atlas Cons. Min & Dev't	3.05	3.05	3.05	3.05	2,000
Dizon Copper Silver Mines	1.5	1.5	1.5	1.5	10,000
Lepanto Cons Mng. Co. A	0.225	0.225	0.225	0.225	500,000
Lepanto Cons. Mng. Co B	0.28	0.28	0.28	0.28	790,000
Manila Mining Corp. A	0.016	0.016	0.015	0.015	177,000,000
Manila Mining Corp. B	0.018	0.018	0.018	0.018	74,000,000
Omico Corp.	0.0065	0.0065	0.006	0.006	633,000,000
Polar Mines & Dev't Corp.	0.027	0.027	0.026	0.026	4,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. A	0.4	0.42	0.4	0.41	3,000,000
Philex Mining Corp. B	0.44	0.45	0.44	0.45	1,520,000
United Paragon Mining Co.	0.14	0.14	0.14	0.14	140,000
OIL					
Imperial Res.	0.014	0.014	0.013	0.013	23,100,000
Interport Res. B	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	0.0036	10,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. A	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	201,000,000
Oriental Pet. & Min. B	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	0.0048	165,000,000
The Philodrill Corp. B	0.22	0.22	0.22	0.22	600,000
Pacifica	0.012	0.012	0.011	0.011	11,000,000
Petroenergy Res. Corp.	2.6	2.6	2.6	2.6	50,000
Sinophil Corp	0.038	0.039	0.038	0.039	6,300,000
Vulcan Ind'l	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	320,000

T-bill rates . . .

From page B1

from the 364-day bills, or the entire amount of its offering. However, it raised only P3.16 billion from the 91-day bill auction and P1.995 billion from the 182-day offering.

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas and the National Economic and Development Authority have warned that the country could be courting a credit-rating downgrade if credit-rating firms and the international business community do not see any significant progress in the Arroyo administration's proposed measures to address the government's pressing fiscal problem.

CURRENCIES

October 11, 2004 Country	Unit	Euro Equivalent	Dollar Equivalent	Peso Equivalent
United States	Dollar	0.80567193	1.000000	56.3920
Japan	Yen	0.007357	0.009132	0.5150
United Kingdom	Pound	1.445859	1.794600	101.2011
Hongkong	Dollar	0.10348	0.128439	7.2429
Switzerland	Franc	0.644331	0.799744	45.0992
Canada	Dollar	0.643508	0.798722	45.0415
Singapore	Dollar	0.479196	0.594778	33.5407
Australia	Dollar	0.592232	0.735078	41.4525
Bahrain	Dinar*	2.137117	2.652590	149.5849
Saudi Arabia	Rial	0.214846	0.266667	15.0379
Brunei	Dollar	0.477775	0.593014	33.4412
Indonesia	Rupiah	0.000089	0.000110	0.0062
Thailand	Baht	0.019527	0.024237	1.3668
UAE	Dirham	0.219362	0.272272	15.3540
Euro	Euro	1	1.241200	69.9938
Argentina	Peso	0.271819	0.337382	19.0256
Brazil	REAL	0.285598	0.354484	19.9901
Denmark	Kroner	0.134409	0.166828	9.4078
India	Rupee	0.01763	0.021882	1.2340
Malaysia	Ringgit	0.212047	0.263193	14.8420
Mexico	New Peso	0.071689	0.088980	5.0178
New Zealand	Dollar	0.550209	0.682920	38.5112
Norway	Kroner	0.120595	0.149683	8.4409
Pakistan	Rupee	0.013586	0.016863	0.9509
South Africa	Rand	0.123475	0.153257	8.6425
Korea	Won	0.000702	0.000871	0.0491
Sweden	Kroner	0.110371	0.136992	7.7253
Syria	Pound	0.015583	0.019342	1.0907
Taiwan	Nt Dollar	0.023908	0.029674	1.6734
Venezuela	Bolivar	0.000421	0.000522	0.0294

Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

Committee on Disposal of Real Properties

INVITATION TO BID

The Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas invites all interested parties to bid for the following real estate properties:

	Location	TCT No.	Area	Description	Selling Price
	METRO MANILA				
	CALOOCAN				
	Banker's Village II, Caloocan City				
1	Various Blocks	7 lots	1,851	Res'l lots 240 to 390 sq.m.	P 1,300 to 1,800
	Rainbow Village 5 Subdivision III, Deparo				
2	Lot 31-B Iron Wood St.	361323	30	Resd'l with 43.6 sqm imp	459,120
3	Lot 31-C Iron Wood St.	361410.	30	Resd'l with 43.6 sqm imp	459,120
	LAS PIÑAS				
4	B6 L 9, San Isidro Subd.	T-77949	365	Fenced residential lot	1,471,500
5	B6 L11, San Isidro Subd.	T-77950	337	Fenced residential lot	1,358,500
6	B2 L1 San Isidro Subd.	T-77948	428	Com'l w/ 957 sqm schl bldg	12,092,000
	MAKATI				
7	371 Sen. Gil J. Puyat Avenue,	186452	2,000	Com'l w/ 6447 sqm 5-storey bldg	243,340,000
8	Units A, B, C, and D, Grnd Flr. Montepino Office Amorsolo & Gamboa Sts. Legaspi Village	CCT-28958	308	Com'l condominium unit	21,525,000
9	108 Gen. Del Pilar St., South Cembo	T-218928	285	Resl w/ 388 sqm imp	6,580,000
	8737 Paseo de Roxas - 1st e-Bank Tower				
10	Various Floors	23 units	10,402	Com'l Condo Units 266 sqm to 740 sqm w/ parking slots	P 60,000 to P120,000/ sqm
	PDCP BankCenter, cor. Herrera, San Agustin & Leviste Sts.				
11	Various Floors	7 units	779.40	Office/commercial condo units 71 sqm to 269 sq.m.	P 60,000 to P100,000/sqm
	MANILA				
12	Manhattan Bldg. Nueva St. Binondo	212436 to 37	632	Com'l w/ 11,515 sqm 17-stry bldg.	95,631,000
13	Rizal Avenue cor. Callejon St., Blumentritt	212435	144	Com'l w/ 179 sqm. 2-Storey bldg.	4,852,500
14	Unit 1002, 10th Flr Prestige Tower Condo. Ongpin	CCT-46211	111	Res'l condo w/ parking	3,835,000
	MARIKINA				
15	Lot 5-A Gregorio St., Sto. Niño	415424	40	Residentiall lot w/ imp.	192,000
16	Lot 5-B Gregorio St. Sto. Niño	415425	40	Residentiall lot w/ imp.	192,000
17	Lot 5-I Gregorio St., Sto. Niño	415432	40	Residentiall lot w/ imp.	192,000
	MUNTINLUPA CITY				
18	Lot 276 St. Bernard St. San Jose Subd.	T-11478	563	Residential Lot	4,054,000
	PARAÑAQUE				
19	Badoni St., Fourth Estate Subd.	150090	193.5	Res'l lot w/ 2 hses.	2,294,000
	QUEZON CITY				
20	Unit A, Grnd Flr. St. Francis Condo, Aurora Blvd.Cubao	CCT-5392	275	Com'l condo unit w/ mezzanine	12,672,000
21	Lot 797-C-5, Luzon Ave. Brgy. Culiat	106913	10,000	Residential lot	35,000,000
22	Lot 797-C-2, Luzon Ave. Brgy. Culiat	106914	10,000	Residential lot	35,000,000
23	19 Mother Ignacia Ave. Brgy. Paligsahan	N-243874	1,000	Com'l/Res'l w/ 4 bldg Imp.	31,337,000
24	Quirino Hway, Brgy. Kaligayahan, Novaliches	N-242996	300	Com'l w/ 402 sqm 2-storey	9,785,000
25	Unit 909, Imperial Condo, Timog cor. T. Morato	N-31474	46.69	Res'l condominium unit	2,672,000
	RIZAL				
	Angono				
26	Don M. Santos Ave.Ext. Grandvalley Subd	662775	180	Vacant residential lot	270,000
	Grand Valley Subdivision				
27	Block 26 Lot 28 , Phase 4	665926	276	Residential lot	441,600
28	Block 26 Lot 29 , Phase 4	665927	249	Residential lot	398,400
	Antipolo				
29	Block 9 Lot 5 Sumulong Highway, Brgy. Dela Paz	R-11135	401	Commercial lot	1,604,000
30	L 16, B 8, Kay Ugat, Brgy Cupang	R-13186	300	Residential lot	60,000
31	Lot 9-B Everly Hills Subd. Cupang	R-11133	570	Agricultural land	2,075,000
32	Glen Oaks Subd., Marcos Hiway, Brgy. Sn Isidro	369 lots	633,933	Subdivision lot for development	401,505,400
33	Lot 2, Sitio Galili Pantay, San Jose	R-11137	11,623	Agricultural land	19,625,000
34	L 13, B 3, Sitio El Dorado, Brgy. San Jose	R-13182	364	Res'l. lot w/ Impvts	655,000
35	B8 L73, Rd Lot 6, Aries II Subd.	R-5163	240	Residential lot	806,000
36	B8 L71, Rd Lot 6, Aries II Subd.	R-5162	240	Residential lot	806,000
	Mola Alta, Brgy. Dalig				
37	Block 7 Lot 22	R-2097	203	residential lot	1,015,000
38	Block 7 Lot 76	R-2092	105	residential lot	525,000
	Foliage Hills, Cottonwoods Subd.				
39	Block 1 Lot 36	R-2084	262	residential lot	1,493,400
	Bankers Village II				
40	Block 2 Lot 11 cor. Lawin & Kalapati Sts.	R-5154	403	Residential lot	806,000
41	Block 8 Lot 27 Iloilo St.	R-11136	425	Residential lot	850,000
42	Block 3 Lot 7	R-11134	396	Residential lot	792,000
	Bankers Village III				
43	L36 B4, Kalapati St.	R-13185	278	Residential lot	278,000
44	L 6 B 4, Raja Agu St.	R-13184	380	Residential lot	684,000
45	L 6 B 12, Roxas St.	R-13183	300	Residential lot	540,000
	Cainta				
46	35 Imperial cor Gallego Sts, Vista Verde Vill	T-682331-32	450	Res'l w/ 650 sqm imp	7,178,000
	San Mateo				
47	Gen Antonio Luna St. Gitnang Bayan I	415295	1,844	Com'l w/ 2 school bldgs	20,477,000
48	Lot 112C-3	418093	9,827	Residential lot w/ imp.	19,396,000
49	Block 1 Lot 2, Bankers Village Ph 3	434031	233	Residential lot	466,000
	Bankers Village Ph 9				
50	Lot 2, Block 2	430428	15,293	Residential lot	7,646,500
51	Lot 2 Block 1-A	430342	1,306	Residential lot	653,000
52	Lot 2-A-1	430429	8,000	Residential lot	4,000,000
	Tanay				
53	Marcos Hiway, Brgy. Sampaloc	M-113404	1,403	Res. with 147 Improv.	1,231,000
	Taytay				
54	Pinesville Subd., Brgy. Dolores	663478	273	Vacant residential lot	546,000
	LUZON				
	BATAAN				
	St. Benedict Homes Subd., Samal				
55	Various Blocks	4 lots	802	Res'l lots 177 sqm to 253 sqm	P 500 / sqm
	BATANGAS				
	Batangas City				
56	Lot 1985-E-2 Villa Precy Bo. Sambat Ilaya	T-50568	238	Res'l w/ imp	190,000
	Balayan				
	Villa San Juan Subd.				
57	PSU-04-003952	TP-3279	18,099	semi-developed res'l lots	3,619,800
58	Various lots	24 lots	119 to 760	semi-developed res'l lots	P 250 to 300/sqm
	Carsada				
59	Lot 2498 Bo. Sta. Rita Carsada	T-50570	285	Res'l w/ 119 sq.m. Imp	705,000
60	Brgy. Sta. Rita Carsada	T-50571	240	Res. with 85 Improv.	540,000
	Lipa City				
61	P. Torres St. Brgy 5 Pob.	130752	217	Vacant commercial lot	6,076,000
62	P. Torres St. Brgy 5 Pob.	130753	889	Vacant commercial lot	24,892,000
	Lian				
63	F. Lejano cor. Mabini Sts. Lian	T-85361	253	Res'l w/ 55 sqm low cost hse	759,000
	Rosario				
64	Lot 1576 Brgy. Bagong Pook	T-116224	545	Res'l w/ 136 sq.m. imp	936,000
65	Lot 601 Poblacion Brgy. D	T-116223	380	Res'l w/ imp	2,090,000
66	Lot 6-B Poblacion Brgy. D	T-116230	365	Residential lot	911,000
67	Lot 10 Brgy. Mabato	T-116235	511	Res'l w/ 98 sq.m. imp	145,000
68	Lot 8929-C-6 Brgy. San Ignacio	T-116234	451	Res'l w/ 106 sq.m. imp	155,000
69	C. Alday St. Brgy. Namuco (Pob. Brgy B)	T-116233	209	Res'l w/ 93 sq.m. imp	882,000
	San Jose				
70	Brgy. Balagtasin I	T-112504	1,825	Agro-ind'l lot w/ poultry	365,000
	San Pascual				
71	L10 Goldland Royale Villas, Brgy. Sn Antonio	T-116228	81	Res'l w/ Imp	81,000
72	B8 L8 Goldland Royale Vil, Brgy. Sn Antonio	T-116229	120	Residential lot	120,000
73	Sitio Hangkaan, Brgy. Poblacion	T-116225	386	Res'l w/ imp	772,000
	Camella Homes, Brgy. Sambat				
74	Block 1 Lot 5	110914	60	res'l lot w/ 25 sqm hse	242,000
75	Block 4 Lot 19	110913	60	res'l lot w/ 25 sqm hse	322,000
76	Block 4 Lot 21	110912	60	res'l lot w/ 25 sqm hse	322,000
77	Block 19 Lot 27	110915	100	vacant res'l lot	230,000
78	Block 7 Lot 1	110916	230	vacant res'l lot	575,000
	BULACAN				
	Marilao				
79	Barrio Abanagan	T-424900 (M)	530	Agri/Resl Lot	795,000
	Norzagaray				
80	Bo. Minuyan	T-375331	240	Residential	120,000
81	Bo. Minuyan	T-375332	240	Residential	120,000
	Pulilan				
82	Cagayan Valley Rd., Sto Cristo	T-155882	520	Res'l lot w/ 298 sqm. hse	1,844,000
	Sitio Kalayakan, Brgy. Calumpang, San Miguel				
83	Various lots	23 lots	1000 to 1,442	Agricultural land	P 10 per sq.m.
	San Jose del Monte				
84	Rd 12, Area A, Brgy Minuyan a/	T-375277(M)	627	Res' lot w/ 3 Imp. piggery	1,330,000
85	Mla. Newtown Subd., Minuyan, SJDM	405111(M)	109,103	Golf Course w/ clubhse, Pool	175,324,000
	Sta. Maria				
86	E. G. Concepcion St. Guyong, Sta. Maria	T-409915 to 16	1,419	Residential lot w/ imp.	3,207,500
	Celeste Compound				
87	Lot 1	T-387364(M)	3,757	Res'l lot w/ 6 sqm Imp.	2,629,900
88	Lot 538-A-5	T-387365(M)	400	Vacant residential lot	160,000
89	Lot 539-B-6	T-387366(M)	658	Res'l lot w/ 270 sqm. hse	2,879,000
	CAGAYAN				
90	A. Bonifacio Street, Pob. Tuguegarao City	T-133648 to 50	372	Com'l w/ 166 sqm bank branch	12,399,000
	CAVITE				
	Bacoor				
91	Tirona Highway & Road Lot 4, Brgy. Habay	T-1024190	256	Com'l w/ 237 sqm 2-storey	6,516,000
	Bacoor Business Center				
92	Various Units	5 units	28.25 to34.94	Com'l/res'l condo unit	15,000 per sqm
	La Residencia de Bacoor Subdivision, Aniban				
93	Various lots	13 lots	217 to 415	vacant residential lot	4,600 to 4,700/sqm
	Dasmariñas				
	Goldenville Subdivision Phase I				
94	Lot 13 Blk 18	1025003	35	Resd'l with 42 sqm imp	378,000
95	Lot 8 Blk 21	1028348	40	Resd'l with 26 sqm imp	215,200
	Goldenville Subdivision Phase II				
96	Lot 1 Blk 12	1024896	52	Resd'l with 21 sqm imp	360,000
97	Lot 5 Blk 11	1025002	36	Resd'l with 21 sqm imp	157,500
98	Lot 11 Blk 1	1028349	35	Resd'l with 42 sqm imp	299,180
99	Lot 22 Blk 8	1028350	36	Resd'l with 21 sqm imp	201,600
	Cardinal Dasmarinas Village II				
100	Lot 6 Blk 7	1024897	66	Resd'l with 30 sqm imp	198,000
101	Lot 22 Blk 3	1024898	88	Resd'l with 36 sqm. Imp	264,000
102	Lot 20 Blk 4	1025001	64	Resd'l with 36 sqm imp	288,000
	Dexterville Classic Subdivision				
103	Lot 7 Blk 4	1025005	32	Resd'l with 19 sqm imp	195,000
104	Lot 2 Blk 14	1025004	45	Resd'l with 25 sqm imp	306,000
105	Lot 8 Blk 15	1028347	60	Resd'l with 25 sqm imp	477,600
	Imus				
106	Gen. E. Aguinaldo Highway, Brgy. Tanzang Luma	T-1024189	319	Com'l w/ 358 sqm 2-storey	9,572,000
	Mendez				
107	Market Rd. cor J. P. Rizal, Mendez	944522	250	Com'l w/ 341 sqm 2-stry bldg.	2,758,000
	Naic				
108	L5 B4 Uniwide Sales Coastal City Brgy. Timala	T-1024192	1,001	Residential lot	2,803,000
	Tagaytay				
	Crosswind Subdivision, Bo. Iruhin				
109	Various lots	12 lots	630 to 2,796	vacant residential lot	5,000 to 8,000/sqm
	ILOCOS SUR				
110	Lot 2, Provincial Road, Brgy. Cabuloan, Sta. Catalina	T-41077	709	Res'l w/ 239 sqm. imp	1,363,300
	ISABELA				
111	No. 86 Don Jose Canciller Ave., Dist.1, Cauayan	T-327312	767	Com'l w/ 427 sqm imp.	7,492,000
112	Lot 9-1-4, Dist. 1 (Centro), Cauayan	T-327313	538	Residential lot	215,500
113	Lot 9-1-5, Dist. 1 (Centro), Cauayan	T-327314	539	Residential lot	215,500
	LAGUNA				
	Cabuyao				
114	Lot 2 Blk 1 St. Joseph Village 5, Buton	499258	40	Resd'l with 21 sqm imprvt	246,000
	Calamba				
115	J. P. Rizal, Real	472984	334.33	Com'l w/ 1,204 sqm 4 stry	17,609,000
	Calauan				
116	Alcantara Comp. Brgy. Paliparan	T-216031	1,506	Agro-ind'l lot w/ res'l bldg	487,500
117	Lot 1-b-74 Brgy. Paliparan	T-213033	26,588	Agro-ind'l lot w/ poultry	1,861,160
	San Pablo City				
118	Angeles Heights Subd., San Gabriel	T-53842	241	Residential lot	482,000
	Andal Subd.Brgy. San Roque				
119	Various lots	23 lots	120 to 321	vacant residential lot	1400 to 1,500/sqm
120	Lots 1 & 2, Block 9	T-54142 - 43	272	Res'l w/ 60 sqm imp	783,200
	Sta. Rosa				
	La Residencia de Sta. Rosa				
121	Lot 50 Block 20	T-229444	210	Resl w/ 203 sqm imp	3,449,000
122	Lot 51 Block 20	T-229445	210	Resl w/ 228 sqm imp	3,693,000
123	Lot 52 Block 20	T-229446	210	Resl w/ 212 sqm imp	3,537,000
124	Lot 3 Block 20	T-229447	180	Resl w/ 190 sqm imp	3,540,000
125	Lot 1 Block 20	T-229448	170	Resl w/ 204 sqm imp	3,264,000
126	Lot 54 Block 20	T-229449	210	Resl w/ 204 sqm imp	3,459,000
	Promenade				
127	Lot 2 Block 4	T-229450	921	Residential Lot	8,289,000
128	Lot 1 Block 10	T-229451	721	Residential Lot	6,489,000
	NUEVA ECIJA				
	CABANATUAN				
129	Lot 2215 Arenas St, Mayapyap Sur	T-108518	595	Res'l w/ 251 sqm imp	1,994,000
130	Lot 18, Blk 3 , Monte Vista Subd.	T-108517	237	Res'l w/ 100 sqm imp	673,500
131	Lot 1411-W & 1412-B, Melencio Ave cor. Paco St.	106867/68	286	Com'l with 197sqm bank branch	8,650,000
132	Lot 13 Blk 8, Kahel St., Villa Benita Subd.	107030	248	Res'l with 121 sqm impr	1,247,000
	Kalikid Sur, Magsaysay				
133	Various Lots	12 lots	229 to 287	Vacant residential lots	P250 to 265/sqm
	Gen. Natividad				
134	Lot 3293-F-3-A Undanga St., Pob	NT-292170	572	Com'l w/ 180 sqm warehse	932,000
135	L 10 B 1 Brgy Talabutab-Norte	NT-292027	721	Res'l w/ 80 sqm imp.	520,000
	Guimba				
136	Prov. Rd nr Km Post 154, Guimba	N-26485 to 87	5,640	Industrial lot w/ various imp.	6,500,000
137	Lot 20 Blk 5, Zulueta Subd. Maturanok, Guimba	N-26431	206	Residential lot	288,000
138	L 17 B 14 Señora Lane, Zulueta Subd.	T-28548	330	Resl w/ 1221 sqm imp.	551,000
	San Jose City				
139	L5&6/B5, Ramar Village	24355/59	360	Res'l w/ 328 sqm imp	2,177,000
140	L5/B12 Encarnacion Subd.	24356	200	Residential lot w/ imp.	360,000
	Christianville Subd.				
141	Various lots	9 lots	176 to	Residential lot	P 1300 to
	Sto. Nino Ville Subd				
142	Various lots	3 lots	335	Residential lot w/ imp.	P600 per sq.m.
	San Leonardo				
143	Tabuating, San Leonardo	NT-277145	961	Residential	288,000
144	Tambon, San Leonardo	277144	270	Com'l w/ 152 sqm 1-stry bldg.	1,796,000
	Sto. Domingo				
145	Lot 595, Magsaysay St., Sto. Rosario	N-26432	2,015	Residential lot	503,750
146	Lot 89-C-2, Magsaysay St., Sto.Rosario	N-26433	1,887	Residential lot	660,450
	NUEVA VIZCAYA				
147	Lot 4055-A-1, R. Magsaysay St., Quirino, Solano	T-128173	341	Res'l w/ 120 sqm bungalow	1,072,000
148	Kristine Hotel, J. Luna cor. Jumapa St.	4 lots	3,487	Res'l lot w/ 2,530 sq.m. 2-stry hotel and two swimming pools	15,781,860
149	Brgy. Roxas, Solano				
	ORIENTAL MINDORO				
	Naujan				
150	Sitio 4, Brgy. Aurora	110202	25,000	Agricultural	375,000
	San Teodoro				
151	Brgy. Road	110193	204	Com'l w/ 170 sqm. bank bldg	667,000
	Victoria				
152	Brgy. Loyal	110201	61,099	Agricultural	611,000
	Puerto Galera				
153	Brgy. Aguada, Puerto Galera	110197	714	Agricultural	214,200
154	Various Lots	3 lots	400 to 1,424	Residential lots	P300 to 500/sqm
	PAMPANGA				
	Angeles City				
155	Lot 655-A, Narciso St., Josefa Subd	118917	429	Residential lot w/ imp.	644,000
156	664 Macapa St., Clarkview Subd.	118921	647	Res'dl w/ 150sqm imp.	1,599,000
157	Rosal St. Bancal Comp. , Hensonville Subd.	118916	215	Resd'l w/ 73 sqm imp.	651,000
158	Quirino St, Floridel Subd.	118918-20	794	Res'l w/160sqm imp	1,901,000
	Apalit				
159	Lot 23 Block 3, Larlin Village	523529-R	63	Res'l w/ 20 sq.m. imp	174,000
	Mabalacat				
160	Lot 4 Blk 1,Mac Arthur Highway, Dau	T-536193-R	331	Com' lot w/ 188 sqm. Com'l bldg & 255 sqm 4-door aprtmnt	9,843,000
	Macabebe				
161	Sto. Rosario	7299-R.P.	1,269	Resd'l w/ 90 sqm imp	254,000
	Mexico				
162	Lot 1, Brgy. Road, Brgy. Suclaban	523803-R	20,000	Industrial w/ staff house	10,000,000
	San Simon				
163	Brgy. San Jose	T-496341	829	Residential	83,000
	PANGASINAN				
	Alaminos				
164	Lot 3-A , Poblacion Road, Brgy. Tagudin, Mabini	23602	5,173	Agricultural/Residential land	528,000
	Dagupan City				
165	L5/B24 Sunrise Subd.	73690	282	Residential lot w/ imp.	705,000
166	Bayanihan Vill. Caranglaan Dist.	73691	143	Residential lot w/ imp.	143,000
	Malasique				
167	Lot 1-M, Aliaga	254325	2134	Resd'l w/ 93sqm imp.	326,000
	San Carlos City				
168	Lot 1-1-1- Perez Blvd.	33775	272	Residential lot	136,600
169	Lot 1-03 Perez Blvd.	33772	292	Residential lot	146,000
170	Lot 5572 Barangay Road, Brgy. Bolingit	33774	586	Residential lot	87,870
171	No.127 Don M. Posadas Ave., Taloy	33773	236	Res'l Lot w/ 218 sqm 2-stry imp.	830,778
	Urdaneta				
172	Lot 451-B, MacArhur Highway, Poblacion	266039	705	Com'l w/ 1271 sqm 2-storey	16,000,000
173	Nancayasan, Urdaneta	254326	2,098	Com'l lot w/ imp building	23,704,800
	Villasis				
174	Lot 5545-B, Honeymoon Road, Brgy. Bacag	266040	3,023	Residential lot	453,000
	LUCENA				
175	Lot 1-C-3-B Quezon Ave. Ext. Brgy Cotta	T-110914	3,986	Ind'l/Com'l Lot w/ imp	15,944,000
176	Lot 1182-B-2-E-7, Purok Ilang-Ilang, Brgy. Iyam	T-108143	1,000	Residential lot	500,000
177	Lot 1182-A-1-C, Purok Ilang-Ilang, Brgy. Iyam	T-108144	400	Residential lot	280,000
	QUEZON				
178	Lot 3519-A PLDT Road Brgy Ayuti, Lucban	T-409373	1,100	Res'l /Agri w/ 669 sqm piggery	1,748,000
	SORSOGON CITY				
179	L 23 B 31 St. Peter & Paul Ville Subd	T-58712	314	Residential Lot	204,000
	TARLAC				
180	L 14-17, B 1, McArthur Hiway, San Rafael	T-362268 to 71	3,607	Com'l w/ office bldg & rice mill	12,331,000
181	Lot 3221-A-1, Mc Arthur Hiway Sta Cruz	T-362272	906	Residential Lot	906,000
	Matatalaib				
182	Lot 7 Blk 9 Robertsville City Sitio, Tarikan	357345	39	Resd'l with 52.4sqm imprvt	480,000
183	Lot 1 Blk1 Roberstville City Sitio, Tarikan	357353	38	Resd'l with 52.4sqm imprvt	540,000
	Robertsville City				
184	Various lots	11 lots	53	Res'l w/ 37.5 sqm imp	P 4,800 to P6,150 / sq.m.
	San Jose				
185	Villa Aglipay, Bo. Marianes	353636	17.71 ha	Agricultural land	16,917,000

Deadline for submission of duly accomplished bid forms enclosed in sealed envelopes shall be on **27 October 2004, 10:00 A.M. at Rm MR3A 3rd Floor 5-Storey Building, Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas, BSP Main Complex, corner P. Ocampo Sr. St. Malate, Manila.** All bids will be opened immediately after the deadline for submission of bids.

TERMS AND CONDITIONS

1. The Buyer is deemed to have inspected the property.
2. The sale of the properties shall be "As is, Where is" and the winning bidder shall undertake the responsibility to acquire and maintain peaceful possession and enjoyment of the property without seeking the assistance of the BSP.
3. The BSP reserves the right to withdraw any or all of the properties offered for sale at any time before the deadline for submission of offers, and to reject any or all bids or to waive any infirmity found therein, or to accept such offers as will be considered advantageous to the BSP.
4. The Committee will immediately start accepting offers for negotiation, in the event of a failed bidding, and will continue to accept offers through the Asset Management Department. However, the Committee may at its discretion, elect to conclude the negotiation immediately after failure of bidding whenever there is a highest complying offeror ascertained.
5. Offerors at the Public Bidding must tender a BID BOND equivalent to 10% of the minimum bid price and offerors under the negotiated sale basis must submit an EARNEST MONEY equivalent to 10% of the asking price either in CASH or CASHIERS's/MANAGER'S CHECK payable to the Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas which shall form part of the consideration once the offer is approved by the Monetary Board.
6. ALL OFFERS ARE SUBJECT TO FINAL APPROVAL OF THE MONETARY BOARD.

Complete description of the properties, rules and regulations on the bidding procedures and the prescribed bid forms are available for a minimal fee of P50.00 at the Asset Management Department, Rm. 313, Five-Storey Bldg. at Tel. Nos. 523-34-86; 523-34-20; 404-21-14; 536-56-36 and 524-70-11 to 51 locs. 2857; 2381; 2235

MELPIN A. GONZAGA
Committee Chairman

(PDI--Oct. 12, 2004)

'Touching the Future, Leading the Way'

Quezon City Marks 65th Founding Anniversary

Messages

MY esteemed greetings to the good people of Quezon City on the occasion of your 65th Foundation Anniversary.

The growth of Quezon City from a town of modest means 65 years ago into the mdoern and progressive city that it is now laudable. Today, your city moves on to a more promising stage of development. By working to the best of your ability to attain your hopes and dreams, you also help the government in advancing our national welfare.

I enjoin you to continue striving for and bringing about peace and progress to our nation. Help me achieve our ten-point agenda as we beat the odds and challenges that come our way. Together, we will usher a future of unsurpassed wealth and opportunity for all.

Mabuhay kayong lahat!

GLORIA MACAPAGAL - ARROYO
President
Republic of the Philippines

MY most cordial greetings to the people of Quezon City as they celebrate the city's 65th Foundation Anniversary on October 6-12, 2004.

The weeklong event is a celebration of your success and opportunity for thanksgiving for being one of the most financially stable local government units in the country. Such feat may be attributed to your noble vision to be a model of effective governance and responsible leadership, working in partnership with the citizenry in building a "quality community". I share your mission to provide quality service to make Quezon City an ideal community and laud the residents for their noble aspiration to uplift the quality of their lives, as led by well-motivated and professional public officials and employees.

Your city, being a hub for education, media, business and industry, plays a big role as our country experiences the need to jumpstart our laggard economy. Now more than ever, we need to implement sound legislative reforms to attract foreign investments and increase corporate transparency. With the strict implementation and full observance of existing laws and the intense efforts of the Government to enact reforms, I believe that our country can have an economic turnaround.

I join you in your worthwhile endeavors and extend my heartfelt gratitude for your support and trust in my ability to serve the Filipino people. MABUHAY ANG QUEZON CITY!

NOLI "Kabayan" L. DE CASTRO
Vice President
Republic of the Philippines

WE commemorate today the 65th Founding Anniversary of Quezon City, proud of the modest progress we have made in the last three years and looking forward to a brighter and more prosperous future.

We embark on another year with our city on a solid and sound financial position. Shoring up the finances of Quezon City has not been easy. When we assumed office in July 2001, we were confronted with a budget deficit of P947 million. In our first six months, we managed to reduce this to only P100 million.

By 2002, Quezon City was no longer in the red: in fact, we had the biggest income among the cities and municipalities in the National Capital Region. Last year, Quezon City retained its rank as the most financially stable local government unit, still number one in net income, cash position, receivables and current assets, according to COA report. For the past two years, the income of Quezon City exceeded its programmed expenditures.

These positive developments in Quezon City would not have been possible without the cooperation of our people.

Our mantra for sound fiscal management is simple: spend less, earn more.

Now that we are financially stable, we have allocated a good portion of our funds for infrastructure. We must upgrade and modernize the underpinnings of our economy to make Quezon City a favorite investment destination.

We have drawn a clear roadmap for Quezon City as an ideal, modern and progressive community. We are confident we will attain our goal.

In terms of good governance, fiscal discipline, and vision, Quezon City hopes to lead the way in the 21st century.

Let us endeavor to stay on course.

FELICIANO R. BELMONTE, JR.
City Mayor

TODAY marks a fresh chapter in the evolving history of our beloved Quezon City. We somehow share the pervasive feeling of mirth and beatitude that engulfs everyone in this moment of joy as we hold our foundation anniversary.

The bliss that we see in the faces of the people along the city's streets, and the burst of reverberating light-hearted laughter we behold in each and every home, not to mention the buntings we observe everywhere, are indications that despite hard and austere times. Filipinos can still contrive to make merry with complacency and aplomb.

But above all the thrill and excitement that we are experiencing at the moment is the fact that this is an opportune time when we can share our blessings to others, especially with our less fortunate brothers and sisters.

By the same token, this is a time to ponder on what we can do to make the days ahead better, for ourselves, for our family, for our city, for our city, and for our country.

And amidst the celebration and merry-making, allow us to seize this opportunity to urge you earnestly not to waver in your labor – strive harder and help the city government in it's strive to build a Quality City. By all means, grab this chance to reaffirm your commitment by way of giving your share in instating the city in its rightful pedestal of esteem, progress and prosperity.

The path towards putting together a better-quality city is a daunting task, but we must remain devoted and assiduous. We cannot do it alone; we count on you to carry out this task with us with mutual cooperation and confidence that we shall achieve our goal of setting up a potent and sustainable society.

More power to us all, best wishes and Mabuhay Tayong Lahat!

HERBERT M. BAUTISTA, mpa, mnsa
Vice Mayor

Mr. Andrew L. Tan

Special Citation

'Businessman of the Year'

For his visionary leadership in the conceptualization and development of Eastwood City which overnight became the most dynamic economic growth center in Quezon City and a magnet for investments; and For generating and enhancing business and employment opportunities in Quezon City.

Given this 12th day of October in the year of the Lord, Two Thousand Four, on the occasion of the 65th Founding Anniversary of Quezon City.

QC cites Andrew Tan Businessman of the Year

THE QUEZON City government honors tonight Megaworld chairman Andrew as "Businessman of the Year," during the testimonial dinner in honor of this year's Gawad Quezon awardees or outstanding citizens. Tan will be presented with a plaque of recognition and appreciation for his singular role in the conceptualization and development of Eastwood City, the newest and most dynamic economic growth center in this premiere urban community.

Tan is the third recipient of this special citation which is given to a businessman who has contributed much to the growth and development of Quezon City's economy.

Mr. John Gokongwei, Jr. was last year's recipient of the special citation as businessman of the year." He followed Mr. Henry Sy, the 2002 awardee.

The awards Committee cited the pioneering efforts of Tan in the establishment of the country's first CyberPark in Eastwood City, today's single largest call center hub in the country, making it the foremost center of business process outsourcing (BPO).

Setting his sight on the vast potential of information technology, Tan envisioned the Eastwood City Cyberpark as a showcase of the Philippine's formidable strength in Information Technology.

Today, the IT park hosts the brightest names in the BPO industry, including top services providers such as IBM, eTelecare and Sitel. It has likewise become the headquarters of call center firms such as Customer Contact Center (C-Cubed), Globalstride, iTouchPoint, Link2Support, Epixtar and Citibank.

Other companies engaged in animation, computer-aided engineering, research and development and systems integration have been drawn to the CyberPark for its superior package of investment incentives on top of a world-class telecommunications and utilities infrastructure.

The IT Park now boasts one of the country's most advanced, fully redundant telecommunications loops, bringing together Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Globe Telecom, Bayantel, Eastern Telecoms, Digitel and Broadband Philippines.

A bustling commercial center by day and a glittering entertainment hub at night, Eastwood City is the country's first and only fully-integrated work-live-study-play complex which foreign visitors found to have no equal anywhere in the world.

Tan initiated the development of Eastwood City Cyberpark at the height of the Asian financial crisis under Megaworld, his flagship company. He also heads Empire East Land Holdings and The Andresons Group, a conglomerate with a 4,000 strong workforce and interests ranging from real estate development to consumer product manufacturing and marketing.

Megaworld has been at the forefront of an impressive urban renewal and redevelopment effort which has completely transformed and redefined Quezon City's landscape.

Together with subsidiaries Empire East Land Holdings, Empire East Suntrust, Megaworld has emerged as the Philippine's top residential developer, with nearly 50 completed residential, commercial and office projects under its belt.

Megaworld has been voted among Asia's best-manage companies by Euromoney and FinanceAsia. It holds the distinction as the country's first ISO 9001-certified real estate developer.

Aside from Eastwood City, the Andrew Tan Group of Companies has completed several other projects in Quezon City which include Narra Heights, Kentwood Heights, El Jardin del Presidente, Gilmore Heights, The Xavier Hills, Greenhills Garden Square, Golf Hill Terraces and Corinthian Hills.

Mayor Feliciano R. Belmote, Jr. said Tan's special citation is well-deserved.

Davide is guest speaker at testimonial dinner for 2004 Gawad Quezon Awardees

CHIEF Justice Hilario G. Davide will be the guest speaker at the testimonial dinner being tendered tonight by the Quezon City government in honor of this year's Gawad Quezon awardees or outstanding citizens at the Celebrity Sports Plaza in Diliman, Quezon City.. Davide heads the list of awardees, representing the judiciary.

The other awardees are: PCGG Chairman Haydeee Yorac, government service; Ms. Helena Z. Benitex, education; Dr. Jaime C. Laya, arts and culture; Justice Leonor Ines Luciano, social work; Atty. Persida V. Rueda-Acosta, humanitarian and community service; Manila Standard editor Jullie Yap Daza, journalism; Dr. Alfredo L. San Agustin, medicine; and Ms. Lydia de Vega Mercado, sports.

Mayor Feliciano R. Belmonte, Jr. and Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista will lead city officials in welcoming the awardees and other guests.

Also to be honored is Andrew Tan who is being given a special citation for his leadership in the conceptualization and development of Eastwood City.

Mayor Wayne Wright of New Westminster City, British Columbia, Canada, with a delegation of city officials and businessmen will be special guests of the Quezon City government during the weeklong festivities. New Westminster is a sister city of Quezon City.

Spearheading the private sector participation in the various events is the Quezon City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, headed by Nathan C. Zulueta, who serves as co-chair of City Treasurer Victor B. Endriga of the executive committee for the festivities.

Among the important events staged earlier this week were: an agro-industrial Fair Exhibit or Caravan ng Kaalaman livelihood seminar; on-the-spot painting contest, drum and lyre exhibition, a rondalla competition, a concert for children; a special concert of the Quezon City Performing Arts and the Quezon City Symphonic Band; a chess tournament and shooting competitions.

A photo-exhibit, entitled "QC at 65: Touching the Future, Leading the Way," is still in progress at the City Hall lobby.

As a long-standing tradition, the image of Our Lady of La Naval is brought from Sto. Domingo church to the lobby of Cuty Hall for the duration of the anniversary activities. Regular masses are being held every day at the City Hall Lobby. A special thanksgiving mass was held last Oct. 2 in honor of Mayor Belmonte who celebrated his birthday that day.

New Westminster Mayor heads foreign guests at QC's 65th founding anniversary festivities

MAYOR Wayne Wright of New Westminster City, British Columbia, Canada, heads a delegation of city officials and businessmen who arrived last Sunday on an official visit to Quezon City under the sister-city program of the Philippine and Canadian government.

Wright and his entourage will be special guests of Mayor Sonny Belmonte and the city government during the week-long anniversary festivities. They are scheduled to grace tonight's testimonial dinner in honor of Quezon City's 2004 outstanding citizens.

Aside from Ms. Chreryl Gauld, the mayor's wife, the delegation include: Councilor Calvin Donnelly, Chief Constable Lorne Zapotichny and his wife, Joyce, Fire Chief Carl Nepstad, City Administrator Paul Daminato, Dr. Irwin Steward and his wife, Lois Steward, Associate Superintendent, Russ Pacey, Barrister and Solicitor Dwight Ross, his wife Judy Ross, businessman Russ Cooper, Ron O'Genski and wife, Donna, Glen Wilson and wife Maiju and Fil-Canadians Walter Gutierrez and his wife, Catalina, Anicia Jalac Miles, Tom Pagalilauan and wife Tomasa, Tomas Malapitan and his wife Eugenia.

The delagation is accompanied by Consul General Zenaida Tacorda-Rabago.

Mayor Belmonte said the visit of the officials of Quezon City's sister city in Canada will promote closer relationship and cooperation in industry, tourism, culture and education and trade between the two cities.

Profile of Andrew L. Tan

ANDREW L. Tan is chairman of Megaworld Corp., Empire East Land Holdings, Inc. and The Andresons Group-a conglomerate with a 4,000-strong workforce and interests ranging from real estate development to consumer product manufacturing and marketing.

Through Megaworld, Tan has been at the forefront of an impressive urban renewal and redevelopment effort that has redefined the metropolitan landscape. He considers his biggest achievement to date the transformation of Libis in Quezon City from a sleepy district into a dynamic, bustling urban center who crown jewel is a live-work-play complex: Eastwood City. Its pioneering Eastwood City Cyberpark has helped put the Philippines on the IT map in the region.

Under Tan's charismatic leadership, the Megaworld Group has emerged as the country's foremost residential developer, with nearly 50 completed residential commercial and office projects under its belt. Together with subsidiaries Empire East Land Holdings, Inc. and Empire East Suntrust (Empire Eat Properties, Inc.), Megaworld forms a housing supermarket that serves the needs of Filipino homebuyers across all segments of the market.

Megaworld has been voted among Asia's best-managed companies by Euromoney and FinanceAsia. It holds the distinction as the country's first ISO 9001-certified real estate developer, and it has since upgraded its ISO certification to the current 2000 series.

Among the group's landmark projects in Metro Manila are the 45-story Petron MegaPlaza in Makati and the most successful township community south of Metro Manila, the Laguna BelAir. In addition to Eatwood City, the group has completed close to 10 projects in Quezon City. The list includes Narra Heights, Kentwood Heights, El Jardin del Presidente, Gilmore Heights, The Xavier Hills, Greenhills Garden Square, Golf Hill Terraces and Corinthian Hills.

With urban redevelopment as his strong suit, Tan and his group of companies have sought to create value in every neighborhood that bears his thumbprint. A Megaworld community creates value in a number of ways: by providing a better environment for people to live and work, by enhancing the market value of the properties within the neighborhood and those in surrounding areas through a spillover effect and by spurring economic activity in the community and its neighboring areas.

Tan is one entrepreneur with a deep, abiding commitment to help improve the lot of the least privileged members of society. His Megaworld Foundation, the non-profit corporate-giving arm of the Megaworld Group, has extended a helping hand to a variety of good causes through college scholarship grants for bright but needed students and financial support for advocacies on nation-building, the environment, women and youth, judicial reforms and responsible media practice. Megaworld is also a full-pledged member of the Philippine Business for Social Progress, an active agent of social development.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

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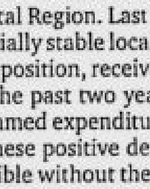

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Together with subsidiaries Empire East Land Holdings, Empire East Suntrust, Megaworld has emerged as the Philippine's top residential developer, with nearly 50 completed residential, commercial and office projects under its belt.

Megaworld has been voted among Asia's best-manage companies by Euromoney and FinanceAsia. It holds the distinction as the country's first ISO 9001-certified real estate developer.

Aside from Eastwood City, the Andrew Tan Group of Companies has completed several other projects in Quezon City which include Narra Heights, Kentwood Heights, El Jardin del Presidente, Gilmore Heights, The Xavier Hills, Greenhills Garden Square, Golf Hill Terraces and Corinthian Hills.

Mayor Feliciano R. Belmote, Jr. said Tan's special citation is well-deserved.

Davide is guest speaker at testimonial dinner for 2004 Gawad Quezon Awardees

CHIEF Justice Hilario G. Davide will be the guest speaker at the testimonial dinner being tendered tonight by the Quezon City government in honor of this year's Gawad Quezon awardees or outstanding citizens at the Celebrity Sports Plaza in Diliman, Quezon City.. Davide heads the list of awardees, representing the judiciary.

The other awardees are: PCGG Chairman Haydeee Yorac, government service; Ms. Helena Z. Benitex, education; Dr. Jaime C. Laya, arts and culture; Justice Leonor Ines Luciano, social work; Atty. Persida V. Rueda-Acosta, humanitarian and community service; Manila Standard editor Jullie Yap Daza, journalism; Dr. Alfredo L. San Agustin, medicine; and Ms. Lydia de Vega Mercado, sports.

Mayor Feliciano R. Belmonte, Jr. and Vice Mayor Herbert Bautista will lead city officials in welcoming the awardees and other guests.

Also to be honored is Andrew Tan who is being given a special citation for his leadership in the conceptualization and development of Eastwood City.

Mayor Wayne Wright of New Westminster City, British Columbia, Canada, with a delegation of city officials and businessmen will be special guests of the Quezon City government during the weeklong festivities. New Westminster is a sister city of Quezon City.

Spearheading the private sector participation in the various events is the Quezon City Chamber of Commerce and Industry, headed by Nathan C. Zulueta, who serves as co-chair of City Treasurer Victor B. Endriga of the executive committee for the festivities.

Among the important events staged earlier this week were: an agro-industrial Fair Exhibit or Caravan ng Kaalaman livelihood seminar; on-the-spot painting contest, drum and lyre exhibition, a rondalla competition, a concert for children; a special concert of the Quezon City Performing Arts and the Quezon City Symphonic Band; a chess tournament and shooting competitions.

A photo-exhibit, entitled "QC at 65: Touching the Future, Leading the Way," is still in progress at the City Hall lobby.

As a long-standing tradition, the image of Our Lady of La Naval is brought from Sto. Domingo church to the lobby of Cuty Hall for the duration of the anniversary activities. Regular masses are being held every day at the City Hall Lobby. A special thanksgiving mass was held last Oct. 2 in honor of Mayor Belmonte who celebrated his birthday that day.

New Westminster Mayor heads foreign guests at QC's 65th founding anniversary festivities

MAYOR Wayne Wright of New Westminster City, British Columbia, Canada, heads a delegation of city officials and businessmen who arrived last Sunday on an official visit to Quezon City under the sister-city program of the Philippine and Canadian government.

Wright and his entourage will be special guests of Mayor Sonny Belmonte and the city government during the week-long anniversary festivities. They are scheduled to grace tonight's testimonial dinner in honor of Quezon City's 2004 outstanding citizens.

Aside from Ms. Chreryl Gauld, the mayor's wife, the delegation include: Councilor Calvin Donnelly, Chief Constable Lorne Zapotichny and his wife, Joyce, Fire Chief Carl Nepstad, City Administrator Paul Daminato, Dr. Irwin Steward and his wife, Lois Steward, Associate Superintendent, Russ Pacey, Barrister and Solicitor Dwight Ross, his wife Judy Ross, businessman Russ Cooper, Ron O'Genski and wife, Donna, Glen Wilson and wife Maiju and Fil-Canadians Walter Gutierrez and his wife, Catalina, Anicia Jalac Miles, Tom Pagalilauan and wife Tomasa, Tomas Malapitan and his wife Eugenia.

The delagation is accompanied by Consul General Zenaida Tacorda-Rabago.

Mayor Belmonte said the visit of the officials of Quezon City's sister city in Canada will promote closer relationship and cooperation in industry, tourism, culture and education and trade between the two cities.

Profile of Andrew L. Tan

ANDREW L. Tan is chairman of Megaworld Corp., Empire East Land Holdings, Inc. and The Andresons Group-a conglomerate with a 4,000-strong workforce and interests ranging from real estate development to consumer product manufacturing and marketing.

Through Megaworld, Tan has been at the forefront of an impressive urban renewal and redevelopment effort that has redefined the metropolitan landscape. He considers his biggest achievement to date the transformation of Libis in Quezon City from a sleepy district into a dynamic, bustling urban center who crown jewel is a live-work-play complex: Eastwood City. Its pioneering Eastwood City Cyberpark has helped put the Philippines on the IT map in the region.

Under Tan's charismatic leadership, the Megaworld Group has emerged as the country's foremost residential developer, with nearly 50 completed residential commercial and office projects under its belt. Together with subsidiaries Empire East Land Holdings, Inc. and Empire East Suntrust (Empire Eat Properties, Inc.), Megaworld forms a housing supermarket that serves the needs of Filipino homebuyers across all segments of the market.

Megaworld has been voted among Asia's best-managed companies by Euromoney and FinanceAsia. It holds the distinction as the country's first ISO 9001-certified real estate developer, and it has since upgraded its ISO certification to the current 2000 series.

Among the group's landmark projects in Metro Manila are the 45-story Petron MegaPlaza in Makati and the most successful township community south of Metro Manila, the Laguna BelAir. In addition to Eatwood City, the group has completed close to 10 projects in Quezon City. The list includes Narra Heights, Kentwood Heights, El Jardin del Presidente, Gilmore Heights, The Xavier Hills, Greenhills Garden Square, Golf Hill Terraces and Corinthian Hills.

With urban redevelopment as his strong suit, Tan and his group of companies have sought to create value in every neighborhood that bears his thumbprint. A Megaworld community creates value in a number of ways: by providing a better environment for people to live and work, by enhancing the market value of the properties within the neighborhood and those in surrounding areas through a spillover effect and by spurring economic activity in the community and its neighboring areas.

Tan is one entrepreneur with a deep, abiding commitment to help improve the lot of the least privileged members of society. His Megaworld Foundation, the non-profit corporate-giving arm of the Megaworld Group, has extended a helping hand to a variety of good causes through college scholarship grants for bright but needed students and financial support for advocacies on nation-building, the environment, women and youth, judicial reforms and responsible media practice. Megaworld is also a full-pledged member of the Philippine Business for Social Progress, an active agent of social development.

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Quezon City's 2004 'Outstanding Citizens'

Hilario G. Davide, Jr.

for Judiciary

For reinforcing people's respect for the Supreme Court with his leadership, impeccable character and integrity, his erudition and probity, and his high sense of justice and honor;

For having distinguished himself in every public position he occupied, earning the exacting credentials and stature to merit the appointment to the country's highest judicial position;

and For enriching Philippine jurisprudence with his learned legal dissertations and judicial decisions.

Haydee Yorac

for Government Service

For serving the government with singular honor and distinction, distinguished by her remarkable success and achievements in every public office she served;

For her uncompromising stand against official abuse and corruption, at one time, suffering imprisonment, yet never giving up her beliefs and conviction;

and For elevating the standards of morality in public service with her unsullied integrity and reputation.

Julie Yap Daza

for Journalism

For her singular achievements in both broadcast and print journalism, drawing healthy public interest on vital issues and sensitive concerns through her newspaper column and television program;

For being among the most highly-repected women journalists in the country today, serving as a model for future generations of writers and journalists; and

In recognition of her high stature and scholarship in her profession

Jaime C. Laya

for Arts and Culture

For promoting and propagating arts and culture through involvement in cultural undertakings and programs, chairing the National Commission for Culture and spearheading various cultural restoration projects;

For his immense contribution to education and literature, at one time serving as minister of education and culture and for having authored several notable books and articles on arts and culture; and

For bringing honor and prestige to Quezon City, having gained the respect and admiration of his peers and contemporaries in various fields of endeavors and professions.

Helena Z Benitez

for Education

For her long, dedicated and continuing service to Philippine education, having devoted most of her life in strengthening the faculty, facilities and scholarship of the Philippine Women's University, the first university for women in Asia, where she now sits as chairman of the Board of Trustees.

For her sponsorship and authorship of several laws which enhanced Philippine education while serving as a senator and Assemblywoman for many year; and

For bringing honor and prestige to her country and to Quezon City with her distinguished participation in international conferences and membership in prestigious organizations.

Persida V. Rueda - Acosta

for Humanitarian and Community Service

For ennobling the legal profession by providing free legal services for the benefit of poor and indigent litigants; serving with dedication the public attorney's office;

For educating the people on law and justice through the holding of seminars and workshops and conducting enlightening radio and television programs on legal issues;

For bringing honor and prestige to Quezon City by establishing herself as an intellectual, scholarly, and highly-respected authority on law for which she has been invited to speak before prestigious forums and to participate in conferences abroad; and

In recognition of the high regard and respect she enjoys in the academe and in the legal profession.

Leonor Ines Luciano

for Social Work

For her deep involvement and leadership in social welfare programs and activities, addressing particularly, the interests and welfare of the youth, women and the less fortunate;

For working with various foundations and agencies engaged in promoting better opportunities for economic advancement of the poor and disadvantaged;

For her outstanding achievements in public service particularly in the judiciary and in Congress; and

In recognition and appreciation of the honor and prestige she has brought to Quezon City for her exemplary life and dedication in serving the poor and the underprivileged.

Alfredo L. San Agustin

for Medicine

For exemplifying the nobility of the medical profession by providing free medical services to poor and indigent patients and undertaking numerous medical missions for disaster victims and urban poor;

For having served with distinction for many years as consultant on health and medicine in to the Quezon City government; and

For bringing honor and prestige to Quezon City for his legendary humanitarian services and commitment to the ethics of the medical profession.

Lydia de Vega - Mercado

for Sports

For her legendary achievements as the country's foremost track and field athlete, bringing honor and prestige to our country by winning gold medals in her special event;

For serving as model athlete, in character and sportsmanship; and

For her continuing involvement in sports development

EASTWOOD CITY CYBERPARK: More than a BPO Hub

AT THE outbreak of the Asian financial crisis, Megaworld took a markedly different tack from other beleaguered property developers by making a conscious effort to launch a truly innovative product that would generate wide market acceptance. Imbued with a pioneering spirit, Megaworld set its sights on a field with a vast potential: information technology or IT.

After surveying various IT hubs around the world, including India's Bangalore, Malaysia, Singapore and even Silicon Valley in the USA, Megaworld knew its mission-and challenge-was to create an IT park model that the country could call its own. Clearly, the company needed to do a great deal more than research in order to conceive and develop a product customized to the needs of the market; it needed to enlist government support.

Convinced that a made-for-the-Philippines IT park offered tremendous potential, Megaworld presented its ideas to the Philippine Economic Zone Authority (PEZA). PEZA proved to be of kindred spirit, jumping at the chance to collaborate with Megaworld in bringing its enterprising vision to life. It brought into the partnership a high level of expertise anchored on a serious study of the efforts undertaken by the government sector in other IT-friendly countries. It then matched these best-of-class initiatives with those of its own aimed at establishing a Filipino IT park on a par with the best in the region.

With Megaworld and PEZA synergistically pooling their expertise, a series of proposals were brought to the PEZA board's table for review. In 1999, PEZA gave the final thumbs-up that paved the way for the development of the country's first IT park: Eastwood City CyberPark in Quezon City. Such a historic partnership also resulted in significant enhancements in PEZA's implementing rules and regulations covering the development of IT parks in the country.

Today, the CyberPark has lived up to its promise as a showcase of the Philippine's formidable strengths in IT. It holds the record as the single largest call center hub in the Philippines, making it the foremost center of business process outsourcing (BPO), one of the country's fastest growing industries. It is home to some of the brightest names in the BPO firmament, including top BPO services provider IBM; eTelecare, the largest Asia-based call center firm; and Sitel, one of the world's top five call centers in terms of revenue. The CyberPark is the headquarters as well of call center luminaries Customer Contact Center (C-Cubed), GlobalStride iTouchPoint, Link2Support, Epixtar and Citibank.

Apart from BPO players, the CyberPark hosts companies engaged in animation, computer-aided engineering, research and development and systems integration. These companies have been drawn to the CyberPark by a superior package of investment incentives backed by world-class infrastructure, telecommunications and utilities.

It boasts one of the country's most advanced, fully redundant telecommunications loops, bringing together top Filipino telcos Philippine Long Distance Telephone Co., Globe Telecom, Bayantel, Eastern Telecoms, Digitel and Broadband Philippines.

Another strategic edge of the CyberPark is its location within a five-kilometer radius from the country's finest schools including Ateneo, University of the Philippines and the University of Asia and the Pacific-a ready source of well-trained, English-speaking manpower. Also conveniently accessible is public transport, as well as the central business districts of Makati and Ortigas and the international airport.

The Eastwood City CyberPark is at the heart of a fully integrated work-live-study-play complex that some foreign visitors say has no equal anywhere else in the world. Among the support amenities in place for this first-ever, 24x7 IT hub are Eastwood City Walk 1 and 2, a hip rendezvous for dining, shopping and entertainment; specialty lifestyle enclaves The Home Center, Fashion Village and Eastwood CyberMall; Robinsons Supermarket; Fitness First; a chapel; and a 400-seat auditorium at the International Centre of Information Technology Education that hosts plays, lectures and multi-denominational gatherings. There is also a bustling residential section where completed projects such as Olympic Heights and Eastwood Lafayette sit alongside fast-rising ones such as Eastwood Excelsior, One Orchard Road, Grand Eastwood Palazzo and Eastwood Parkview.

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The estate of the late **Amorsolo Ulgado Cervantes and Lourdes Altamira Cervantes** was extrajudicially settled among his heirs per Deed of Extrajudicial Settlement dated 20th of September 2004, entered as Doc. No. 436, Page No. 90, Book No. XVI, Series of 2004 of Makati Notary Public Terencio F. Taloma Jr.
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Bangko Sentral ng Pilipinas

BID AND AWARDS COMMITTEE

INVITATION TO APPLY FOR ELIGIBILITY AND TO BID

The BANGKO SENTRAL NG PILIPINAS (BSP) invites A&E Consultants to Apply for Eligibility and to Bid for the **Architectural and Engineering Design Consultancy Services** for the following proposed projects. The bid packages with the corresponding Approved Budget for the Contract (ABC) are as follows:

Project Name	ABC
1.0 Proposed BSP Branch Building in Legazpi and Naga	P 9.12M
2.0 Proposed BSP Branch Building in Tuguegarao	P 5.75 M

The scope of work includes among others the preparation of plans, specifications and detailed estimates to include architectural, electrical, mechanical, structural, electronics and communication, plumbing/sanitary and landscaping works as specified in the Terms of Reference.

The minimum eligibility requirements are as follows:

1.0 The firm must have been in operation for the last fifteen (15) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this invitation).

2.0 The firm must have rendered within the last ten (10) years (reckoned from the date of the first advertisement/posting of this Invitation) A & E design consultancy services, at least three (3) completed new construction projects of similar nature like office buildings, banks, exchanges and financial institutions of similar magnitude as the proposed BSP projects and must be able to submit a certification of satisfactory performance for at least two (2) of the required three (3) projects.

3.0 The principal or Managing Officer must be a Registered Architect with at least twenty (20) years experience in architectural design and coordinating team efforts in A & E design.

4.0 The key personnel should be Registered Architect/s and Engineer/s with at least fifteen (15) years design experience.

5.0 The firm (partnership/corporation/joint venture) must be at least 60% owned by a Filipino citizen.

6.0 In case of a joint venture, a valid joint agreement. The joint venture must have rendered A & E design consultancy services for at least two (2) completed projects of similar magnitude as the proposed BSP project.

The quality-cost based evaluation procedure stipulated in the Implementing Rules and Regulations of RA No. 9184 shall be adpoted for this consultancy service requirement.

Eligibility documents may be obtained from the BAC Secretariat on 5 October until 12 October 2004 for a non-refundable fee of P200.00 at Room 204, 2nd Floor, Five Storey Building at the BSP Main Complex, A. Mabini cor. P. Ocampo Streets, Manila and must be submitted duly accomplished to the same office not later than 4:30 p.m. on 18 October 2004.

The provisions of **Republic Act No. 9184** and its Implementing Rules and Regulations relative to the bidding and award of contract shall apply.

BSP reserves the right to accept or reject any or all bids or parts thereof, to waive defect or any formality therein, or accept such bid or award any part thereof to any consultant/s whose bid/s is/are evaluated to be most advantageous to BSP. Furthermore, BSP is not obliged to compensate/indemnify the consultant for any expenses or loss that may be incurred in the preparation of bid nor does it guarantee that an award of contract will be made.

(Sgd.) MELPIN A. GONZAGA
Vice-Chairman

(PDI – October 6 & 12, 2004)

Magical evening at Del Mar birthday bash

CONSUL Issam El-Dibs of Syria, Petron president Khalid al Faddagh and lawyer Gilda Lim and the birthday celebrator standing Marissa Del Mar shown at the Ramon Magsaysay Center. The event will be aired on Oct. 12, Tuesday IBC-13 11 to 12 p.m. on "Up Close and Personal with Marissa Del Mar." The show is directed by William Mayo and hosted by Marissa Sanchez & Tony Boy Aquino.

PURELY magical! The birthday celebration of Marissa Del Mar was held the night of October 7 at the Ramon Magsaysay Center in Malate, Manila and was a magical celebration of life, songs and dances and a get-together of friends.

An overflow crowd of top celebrities and distinguished personalities in the various sectors of government and industries attended the green and white-themed event which celebrates not only Del Mar's birthday, but also served as a thanksgiving affair she shared with friends and benefactors.

The evening affair was hosted by another popular Marissa, TV personality Marissa Sanchez, and Tony Boy Aquino. The duo was a super combination with Marissa Sanchez bringing the house down with her riotous antics while Tony Boy Aquino played the sober type.

Award-winning composer Vehnee Saturno and internationally acclaimed violinist John Lesaca rendered songs and musical pieces that made the ladies swoon.

Del Mar was visibly touched by the presence of the children of the Children's Hour Philippines, Inc., who gave her a red rose as Vehnee Saturno sang.

Among the notable guests that attended the affair were Gen. Rey Berroya, Libyan Ambassador Salem Adam, Portuguese Consul Edward Fereira, Representatives Timmy Chipeco, Abet Garcia, Vicky Hernandez, Consul and Serge Ortiz Luis Jr., Parañaque Mayor Jun Bernabe, chair Philip Juico (IBC13), Petron president Khalid Al Faddagh, architect Nestor Mangio of The Lakeshore, Noel Gonzales of Muebles Italiano, Dr. James Dy of Chinese General Hospital, Baby Luat, actress Marissa Delgado, Consul El-Dibs Issam, Peter Coyiuto of First Life Assurance Co Inc., director William Mayo, members of her Rotary Club of Makati Urdaneta and other top personalities in the entertainment industry, business sector and government.

A full one-hour feature of the event will be shown in "Up Close and Personal with Marissa Del Mar" on Oct. 12, Tuesday, at IBC 13 starting at 11 p.m.

Sponsoring her birthday celebration were friends from Muebles Italiano, Philippine Chinese General Hospital, The Lakeshore, Pacific Cement Philippines, Inc., DOTC, Pag-Ibig, Solvang Pharmaceuticals Inc., WG&A Superferry, Deo BC Salon, Sonny Bendal de Salon, Kouenji Salon, Celebration Cakes, Caludette's Cakes, Flower Asia, Blue Petals Catering, Senses Floral Art Studio, Bebe's Balloons and Novellino's Wine.

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In Loving Memory on the 3rd Death Anniversary of Our Dearly Beloved

LYDIA C. DIOSOMITO

Of Naic, Cavite

The holy Sacrifice of the mass shall be offered today, Oct. 12, 2004 at the follwing churches:

Immaculate Concepcion Parish, *Naic, Cavite*	6:00 a.m.
Sto. Niño Church, *Ternate, Cavite*	7:00 a.m.
St. Jude Thaddeus, *Trece Martirez, Cavite*	6:00 a.m.
Our Lady of Assumption Church, *Maragondon, Cavite*	7:00 a.m.
St. Nicolas Tolentino Parish, *Congressional Vill., QC*	6:00 p.m.
Our Lady of Hope, *Proj. 6, QC*	6:30 p.m.
St. Vincent Church, *Tandang Sora, QC*	6:00 a.m.

The family request the pious readers to continuously pray for the repose of her soul.

JOSE P. FERNANDEZ

Born: October 12, 1904

Peacefully joined his Creator on November 07, 1987

In celebration of his 100th Birth Anniversary his family remembers him with love & prayers

His loving wife **Lulu**; children **Carmen** and **David**, **Jose** and **Melissa**, **Miguel** and **Lucinda**; grandchildren **Nicholas**, **Henry**, **William**, **Thomas** and **Sam**.

Hon. Pepito Ella Diwajon

(Municipal Mayor, Luisiana, Laguna 1995-2004)
of Luisiana, Laguna & Marikina City

Peacefully joined our Lord on October 8, 2004 at the age of 64.

Interment will be on October 13, 2004 at the Luisiana Municipal Cemetery after the 8:00 a.m. Mass at Our Lady of The Holy Rosary Parish Church.

Isidro Ella Diwajon

of Luisiana, Laguna and Parañaque City

Peacefully joined our Lord on October 6, 2004 at the age of 60.

A special mass at 8:00 am will also be offered at Our Lady of The Holy Rosary Parish Church in Luisiana, Laguna. Cremation will be on October 13, 2004 at the Manila Memorial Park, Parañaque City.

The family, relatives and friends request the pious readers to pray for the eternal repose of their souls.

Memories

"Memory is a way of holding onto the persons you love, the person you are, the love ones you never want to lose."

The **INQUIRER NATIONAL CLASSIFIEDS** brings forth – *Memories* – a tabloid-sized supplement to be published on **October 29, 2004** in time for the remembrance of our beloved loved ones.

This supplement will be dedicated to pre-need plans, funeral homes, memorial parks and other product/services related to death care. This endeavor will give you a chance to showcase your product lines and the attributes that your services offer.

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William (Billy) Singleton Sanchez

Peacefully passed away at the age of twenty-seven years

May 17, 1977 – October 9, 2004

We, his parents **Ed** and **Kathy**; brothers and sisters-in-law **James Edward** and **Irene**, **Rick** and **Carla**; niece **Daphe**; uncles, aunts, and cousins, request our relatives and friends, Billy's many friends, and readers, to join us in wishing for his eternal rest in peace.

His final act in this world is to give his body to those who need it most. His remains will then be cremated in St. Louis, Missouri, USA.

Our Love for him never dies...

In Memory
of a devoted husband and loving father

Vicente del C. Singson

on his rebirth to Eternal Life
10th of October 2004.

Cremains will be at the Our Lady of Mount Carmel Shrine, Doña Juana Rodriguez, New Manila, Quezon City

His family requests relatives, friends and the pious readers to join them in prayers for the eternal repose of his soul.

Interment will be at the Manila Memorial Park, Sucat, Parañaque, October 14, 2004.

SABAS M. ISAGUIRRE, SR.

Retiree of United Laboratories, Inc.

Died in the Grace of our Lord on October 9, 2004 at the age of 79. His body lies in state at Arlington East, C. Raymundo Ave., Pasig City.

Interment to be announced later.

"For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life."
— John 3:16

IN REMEMBRANCE
of the
First Death Anniversary of

LUIGI A. LAGDAMEO

who passed away on October 12, 2003

Holy Masses will be offered today at the following churches:

De La Salle Greenhills Chapel	6:15 AM
Ateneo College Chapel & Southridge Chapel	12 NN
St. James the Great Parish, Ayala Alabang	6:00 PM
Sanctuario de San Antonio, Forbes Park	6:00 PM

ATTY. ANTONIO P. SALVADOR

Died October 10, 2004 at the age of 80.

His bereaved family request friends and relatives for prayers.

His body lies in state at Loyola Memorial Park Chapel #4, Marikina City until October 13, 2004.

Interment will be on October 14, 2004 after the 9:00 a.m. Mass and will be buried in Himlayang Pilipino in Tandang Sora Ave., Quezon City.

CLASSIFIEDS

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Overseas Workers Welfare Administration
OWWA Center Bldg., F.B. Harrison St. cor 7th St. Pasay City
P.O. Box 1617 Manila, Philippines, Zip Code – 1300
Tels.: 891-7601 to 24 • Fax: 833-0187
Website: www.owwa.gov.ph

ANNOUNCEMENT

The Overseas Workers Welfare Administration (OWWA) announces the opening of the Regional Workers Office IV-B, which shall deliver OWWA programs and services to Region IV island provinces, otherwise known as MIMAROPA, consisting of the islands of Mindoro Occidental, Mindoro Oriental, Marinduque, Romblon, and Palawan, on October 8, 2004.

RWO IV-B shall implement OWWA's repatriation, airport assistance; reintegration, insurance, pre-departure orientation seminar (PDOS), pre-departure loan; family assistance loan; livelihood, training and scholarship programs.

Director Annie C. Israel shall head the OWWA RWO IV-B, which is situated at the 7/F Ben-Lor Bldg. at # 1184 Quezon Avenue, Quezon City with telephone numbers 832-12-68, 551-66-43 and 551-11-34.

(PDI – October 12, 2004)

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October 4, 2004

Notice to All Concerned

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This is to inform all interested eligible bidders that the pre-bid conference for the above-stated project shall be conducted on **October 15, 2004 at 2:00 p.m.** at the Bulwagan ng Karunungan, Rizal I Building, DepEd Complex, Meralco Avenue, Pasig City, 1605 Philippines.

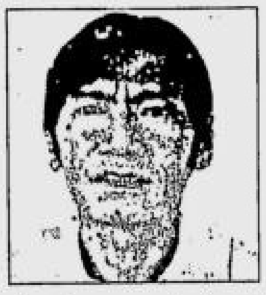
The deadline for the submission and opening of bids shall be on or before **10:00 a.m.** on **November 12, 2004** at the same address stated on the first paragraph.

Interested eligible bidders may obtain further information at the BAC Secretariat, Room 112-A, Mabini Building, DepEd Complex, Pasig City or at Procurement Service, Rizal II Building, DepEd Complex, Pasig City, 1605 Philippines, Tel. Nos. (632) 633-9343/636-6542/635-3762 or at Fax No. 636-6542 from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.

(Sgd.) **JUAN MIGUEL M. LUZ**
Undersecretary and BAC Chairman

(PDI - Oct. 5 & 12, 2004)

NOTICE TO THE PUBLIC



Be it known that warrant for the arrest of **MR. RICHARD W. TANG** with last known address at Century Resort Hotel, Balibago, Angeles City have been issued by the Municipal Trial Court of Angeles City, Branch I, for **VIOLATION OF BATAS PAMBANSA BILANG 22.**

Please direct any information leading to his arrest at Tel. Nos. 526-5923 and 400-9485

(PDI – October 12, 2004)

BUSINESS

Gas, diesel, kerosene prices raised anew

By Abigail L. Ho

LOCAL oil companies yesterday jacked up anew their prices of gasoline, diesel and kerosene.

The pump price of gasoline was raised by 35 centavos per liter while those of diesel and kerosene were increased by 45 centavos a liter.

Pilipinas Shell Petroleum Corp., Caltex Philippines Inc., Seaoil Petroleum Corp. and Flying V effected their price hikes at 12:01 a.m. yesterday, while Total (Philippines) Corp. and Eastern Petroleum Corp. increased their prices at 6 a.m.

As early as 6 p.m. Sunday, new player Unioil Petroleum Philippines Inc. raised its gasoline, diesel and kerosene prices by the same levels.

Oil refiner Petron Corp. has yet to announce its price adjustments as of press time.

Since the start of the year, gasoline prices have risen 11 times by a total of P6 a liter, while diesel prices have gone up 12 times by a total of P5.70 a liter.

Energy Secretary Vincent Perez earlier said an increase of 35-45 centavos a liter for diesel and kerosene was expected this week, as oil firms raised their prices last week by only 35 centavos a liter, or 35 to 45 centavos short of their planned increases of 70-80 centavos a liter.

Perez said oil firms would have to explain why they had also increased the .prices of unleaded gasoline when current world market prices were now lower than those posted last month. Perez was expecting that prices of unleaded gasoline would be unchanged.

"Our computations show that oil refiners have more than recouped the additional costs incurred in the local pump price of unleaded gasoline. The other players, for their part, have already broken even on unleaded gasoline. So there appears to be no reason to increase the price of unleaded gasoline," he said in a statement issued yesterday.

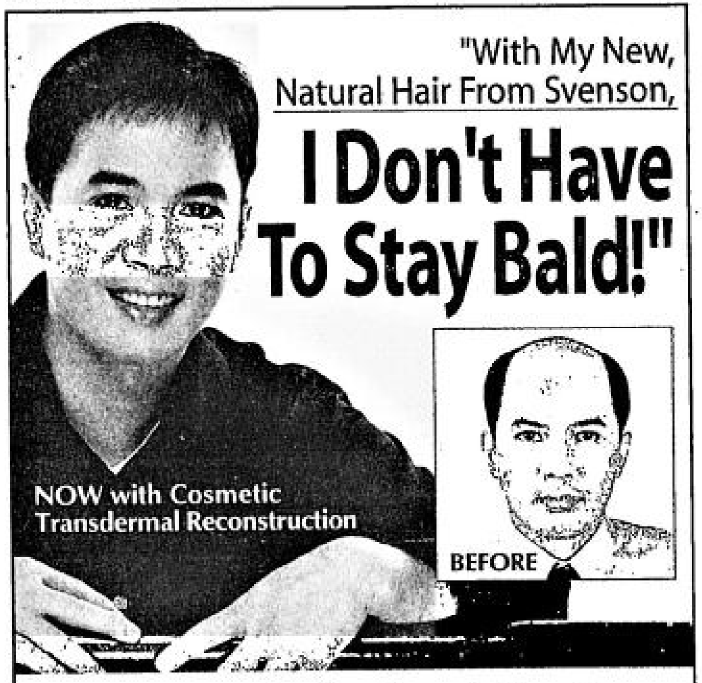
Based on the Department of Energy's monitoring of oil prices, the price of unleaded gasoline based on the Mean of Platts Singapore (MOPS) benchmark for refined petroleum products shed $2.46 a barrel last month to an average of $49.04 a barrel from $51.50 a barrel in August.

Even while the price of MOPS-based unleaded gasoline had begun to inch up this month, the decline in prices from August to September as well as the increases in the local pump prices in the last several weeks should have already covered the under-recoveries of these oil firms.

MOPS-based unleaded gasoline averaged at $53.63 a barrel from Oct. 1 to Oct. 8.

"We have advocated smaller and frequent price adjustments to cushion the impact of the increases on the motoring public. But these increases should be fair and reasonable," he said.

He did not chide the oil firms for jacking up their diesel prices, however, as the price of MOPS-based diesel remained high at an average of $55.40 a barrel in the Oct. 1-8 period, up from $54.29 a barrel in September.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Per DTI Permit No. 2147, series of 2004

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Steel tariff hike seen to raise ₱5B in gov't revenue

THE GOVERNMENT can generate P5 billion in additional revenue yearly if the duties on steel products are pegged at 7-10 percent, said a lawmaker yesterday.

Rep. Alipio Cirilo Badelles of Lanao del Norte said both the consumers and the government never benefited from the prevailing zero tariff on certain steel products.

Tinplate is one steel product that has been enjoying zero tariff since 2000. Tinplate is the raw material for tin cans.

"From 2000 to 2004, when the tariff on tin can is zero, the price of canned sardines did not decline correspondingly," Badelles said citing a DTI price monitoring report. Instead, he added, canned goods became more expensive.

"When the tariff (on tin plates) was 7 percent in 1998, the price of canned sardines was P7.57 but when the tariff became zero in 2000-2004, the price of canned sardines went up to P8.50," Badelles pointed out.

Lanao del Norte, the province of Badelles hosts the giant steel plant of Global Steelworks International Inc., the former National Steel Corp.

Records showed that from 2000 to 2003, steel imports increased in terms of volume. This, however, did not result in higher revenue for the government.

Records also indicated that the 0-3 percent duty imposed on steel products from 2000-2003 resulted in P3 billion in forgone revenue.

"The conclusions, therefore, are clear. Savings generated as a result of zero import duty by intermediate processors like tin can manufacturers are never shared with the consumers," Badelles noted. "The double whammy effect is the government also lost much-needed revenues."

"In this time of crisis, the P5 billion that could be generated from the 7-10 percent duty will have a significant impact on revenue generation," he added.

Gov't needs ₱300B to pursue MTDP

By Michelle V. Remo

THE ARROYO administration yesterday said it would need about P300 billion for projects related to infrastructure and job-creation to fulfill its six-year economic development agenda for the Philippines.

Romulo Neri, National Economic and Development Authority director-general, yesterday presented the government's Medium-Term Development Plan (MTDP), based on President Macapagal-Arroyo's 10-point national program which she outlined during her inauguration last June 30.

The country's chief economist said that a third of the P300 billion would come from the national government's annual budget, while the bigger share would come from investments by the private sector.

According to the infrastructure-development agenda, the government hopes to complete the Nautical Highway System, by developing the roll-on roll-off ports and the highways connecting them to reduce transport costs.

The plan aims to decongest Metro Manila by developing Clark and Subic as the logistics hub in the Asia Pacific region.

"The development plans will consider the (country's) archipelagic economy," the MTDP said. "The connection will decentralize progress to the countryside."

On the area of job creation, the government hopes to develop 2 million new lands for agri-business to generate 2 million new jobs for Filipinos.

The government also aims to create 3 million micro-enterprises and provide them with credit, technology and marketing support, Neri said during yesterday's press conference.

MRT-7 proponent to embark on $500-M property venture

By Clarissa S. Batino

UNIVERSAL LRT Corp. Ltd, the proponent of the Metro Rail Transit-7 project, said it would venture into a $500-million real estate development project in Bulacan.

Under the plan, a new company, to be called MRT 7 Development Co., will be formed to develop a 400-hectare property in that province into a residential and commercial city over 25 years.

Eli Levin, chief executive officer of Universal LRT, said the real estate venture was being pursued in partnership with the SM Group of taipan Henry Sy.

The Sy family, through SM Capital and BDO Capital, is also one of the major shareholders of Universal LRT together with the Go family of Equitable PCI Bank, Penta Capital, Japanese firm Premier Gold and EL International Holdings Corp., owned by Levin.

A consortium led by Universal LRT is proposing to build a $1.2-billion, 22-kilometer integrated transport system that will consist of a mass transit railway that will run from San Jose in Bulacan to North Edsa, a depot for public vehicles and an eight-story car park.

The project aims to decongest Metro Manila by encouraging buses and jeeps to bring passengers from the northern Luzon to the Bulacan terminal through a 17-kilometer highway that the group is proposing to build from Marilao to San Jose del Monte.

The International Finance Corp. had committed to take up a 30-percent stake in the project. Foreign contractors—including Japan's Sumitomo Corp., France's Alstom, Germany's Siemens and China's CNTIC—are members of the consortium. EEI Corp. of the Yuchengco family is also a consortium participant.

The consortium had already acquired 193 hectares of property in San Jose for the development project. It is currently negotiating to purchase another 200 hectares, he added.

Levin said the cost of acquiring the 193-hectare property formed part of the $1.2 billion cost of the transportation project. Universal LRT, he said, would raise $300 million in equity and $900 million through financing.

The SM Group, he said, had reserved a portion within the existing 193-hectate lot for an SM Mall.

DOTC seeks $100M in ADB loan

THE DEPARTMENT of Transportation and Communication has asked the Asian Development Bank to re-open a $100-million, long-term credit line to finance the upgrading of six regional airports.

The facility was closed earlier as the airport project failed not take off

Transport Assistant Secretary Robert Castañares said the ADB was amenable to the request.

The Third Airports Development Project aim to upgrade two regional and four domestic airports. When it was originally proposed, the project was estimated to cost $167 million. Of the amount, $114 million was the foreign exchange component.

The ADB originally committed to lend $93 million for the project.

Transport Secretary Leandro Mendoza said the project was being revived as Southern Philippine Airport Development Project. He said a project reappraisal had been completed and submitted to the ADB.

The project will involve the upgrading of the airports in Cotabato City, Dipolog City, Pagadian, Palawan, Tawi Tawi and Zamboanga.

Aside from the Third Airports project, the Department of Transportation and Communication had also lined up for implementation in the next six year the upgrading of seven international and domestic airports.

Castañares said feasibility studies were being done for the upgrade of the airports in Zamboanga, Laoag, Panglao Island, Bagabag, Busuanga, Siargao and Caticlan.

The transport official said the department was looking at building a new airport in Zamboanga to support the requirements of the existing Zamboanga International Airport.

Clarissa S. Batino

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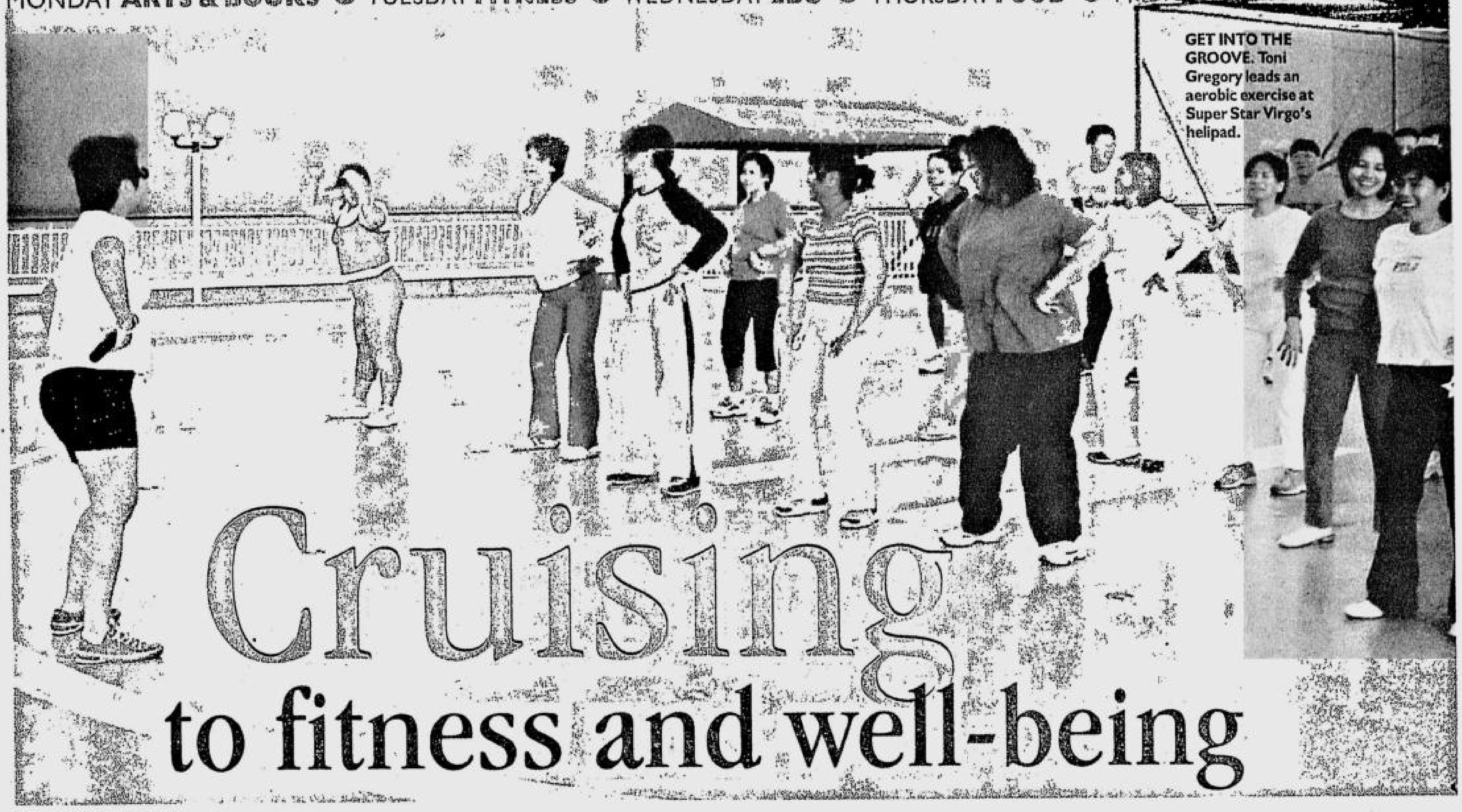
Editor **Chelo Banal-Formoso**

PARTYING in Hong Kong /C2



GET INTO THE GROOVE. Toni Gregory leads an aerobic exercise at Super Star Virgo's helipad.

Cruising to fitness and well-being

Text and photos by Vangie Baga-Reyes

IMAGINE yourself on a cruise ship. What's the image that comes to mind? Do you picture yourself stretched out on a deck chair reading a gripping thriller or downing glass after glass of tropical drinks and munching on chips while gazing at the deep-blue sea? Or perhaps you see yourself enjoying platefuls of pasta, calorie-rich cakes and other fattening morsels.

Well, if you are avoiding cruises thinking they will likely be hazardous to your health, you might want to reconsider.

A cruise might actually mean waking up before sunrise for a power walk around the deck, attending an aerobic class and doing meditation yoga at the ship's helipad where you inhale nothing but fresh sea air. It could mean sensible—yet delicious—meals from a vegetarian buffet, followed by a few spoonfuls of chocolate mousse or cream pie as a reward for your effort.

Irene Leoncio, brand representative of Dove Phil., opted for a healthful cruise and brought along a noted yoga teacher, as well as some media people. The four-night, five-day voyage on Star Cruises' luxury ship, Super Star Virgo, brought the group to Singapore, Malaysia (Penang) and Thailand (Phuket).

"For us, Dove women are always on a journey," said Leoncio. "Journey to self-discovery, self-realization and self-actualization."

Leoncio wanted to let the group experience the "Dove moment" and feel a truly unique encounter with the sun, sea and sky via good meditation and fitness workout.

"To be at sea like this is to be unaware of anything happening anywhere else. It's so nice to be (in a) state of total detachment, especially because our normal world is frenetic and crazy. Everyone tries to attain this state of mind on vacation. Dove and Star Cruise are helping us achieve it," Leoncio said.

She added that Dove popular products (cream bar, body wash, facial wash and deodorant) were more than beauty aids. "Beauty, as we all know, is skin deep," she said. "Therefore, Dove has always tried to help women to be self-sufficient and self-reliant."

In keeping with Dove's goal to let the group experience a fitness moment, yoga teacher Bela Lipat conducted a yoga class at sea for women passengers.

Floating yoga

Lipat stressed that yoga could be done anywhere (though) "it's best to conduct yoga where there's very little stimulus so you can easily focus and let your energy flow... doing yoga (on) a cruise can get the people into the groove with ease. The sea, the air and the smell give a different kind of vibe."

> Dove gives some women a truly unique encounter with sun, sea and sky via meditation and fitness workouts

Though initially designed for women, the yoga session also drew several men. Participants were up before sunrise while the 13-deck high Super Star Virgo was cruising up the coast of Malaysia through the Straits of Malacca.

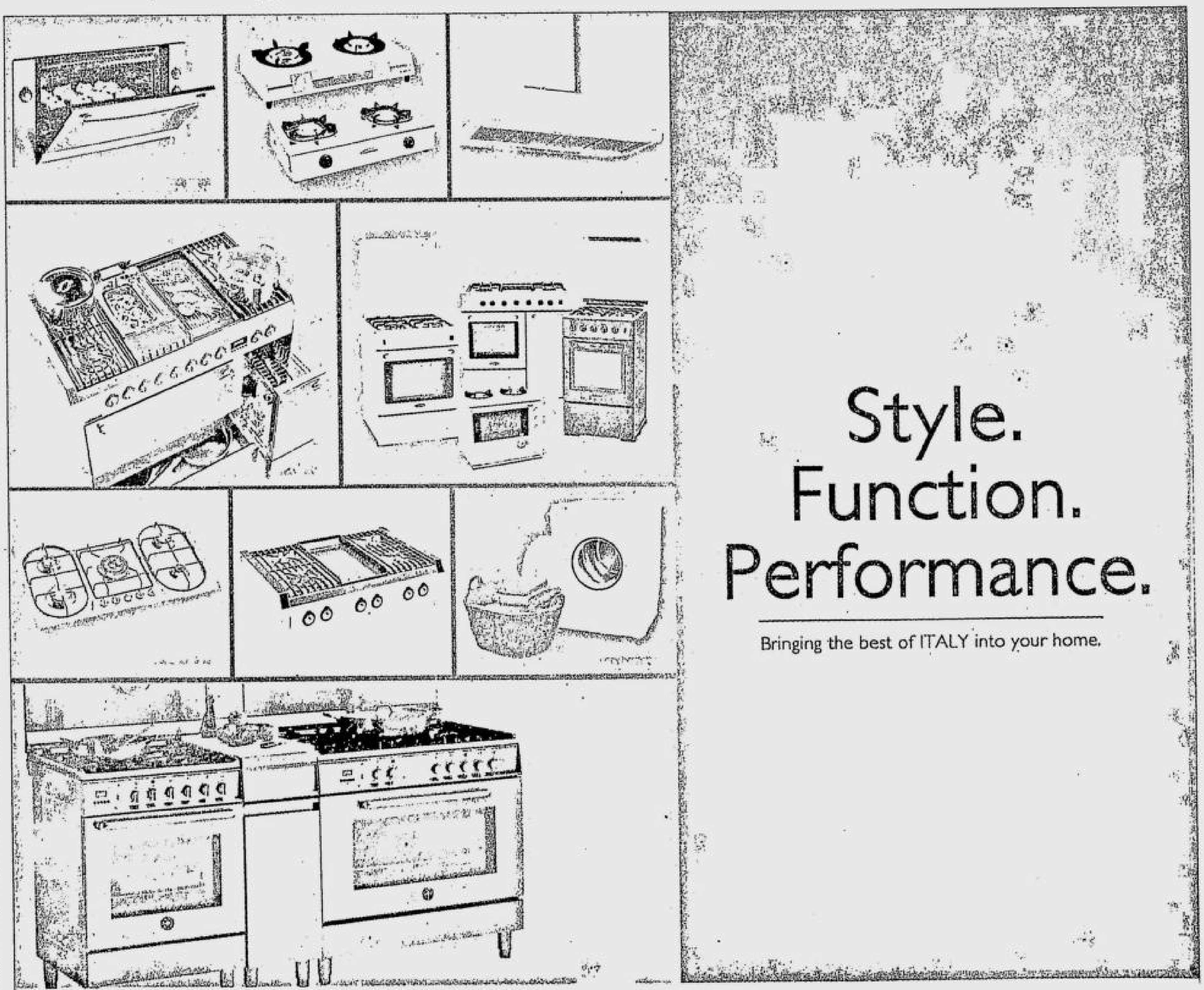
Most Filipino participants were from the real estate companies Crown Asia and Brittany. The cruise, apparently, was part of the incentives of the more than 100 sales and marketing people who were accompanied by Sen. Manny and Rep. Cynthia Villar, who own the companies.

Public relations practitioner Toni Gregory led a short aerobic exercise before the main activity at the ship's helipad. Although there was a heavy downpour when the yoga session started, nobody ran for cover. Lipat carried on with the yoga saying, "It's just rain. It'll stop and you get dry in no time."

Participants sat, stood and rested on the wet mat and did the yoga pose. Lipat taught them body awareness, concentration, coordination and upper body/lower body strengthening, among others.

After the session, one participant was

CRUISING/ C3



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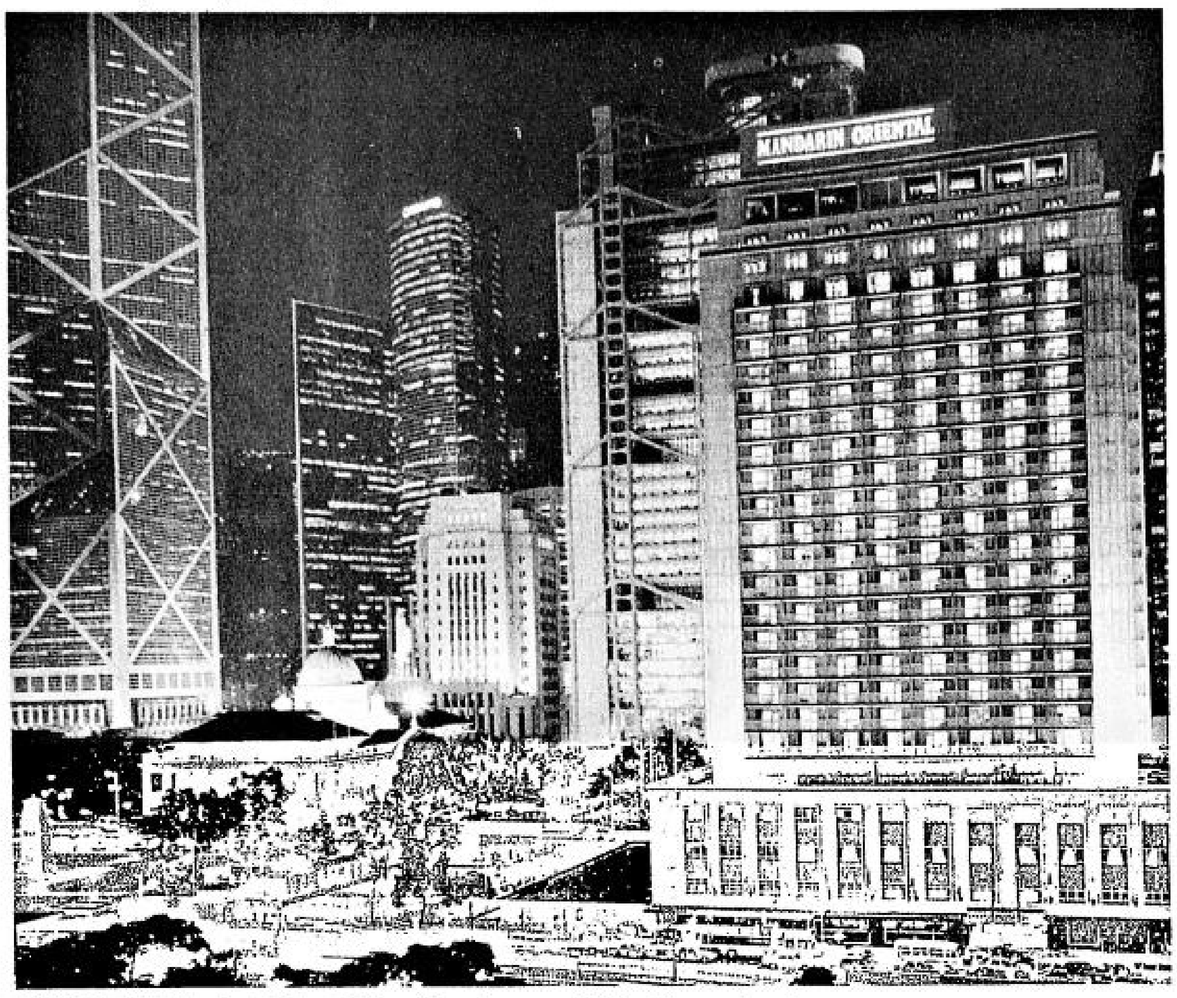
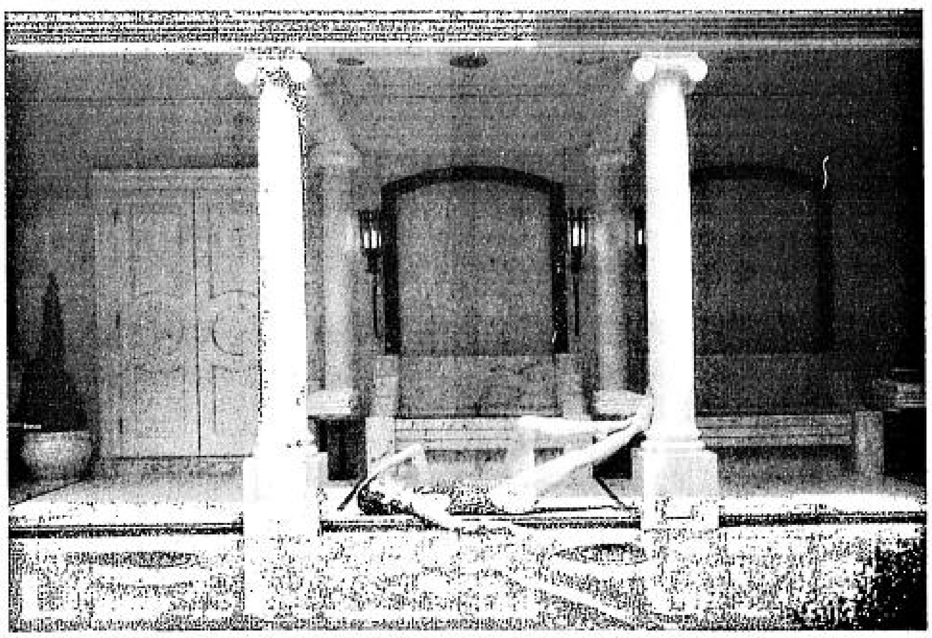
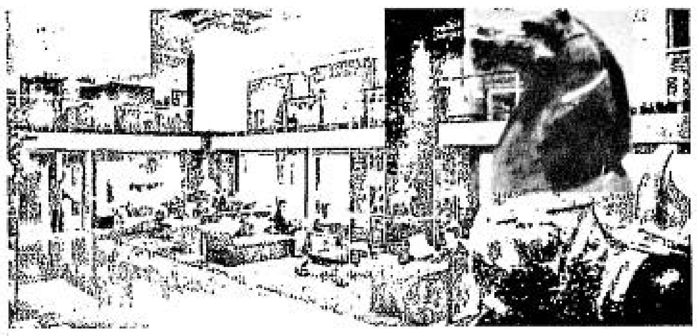


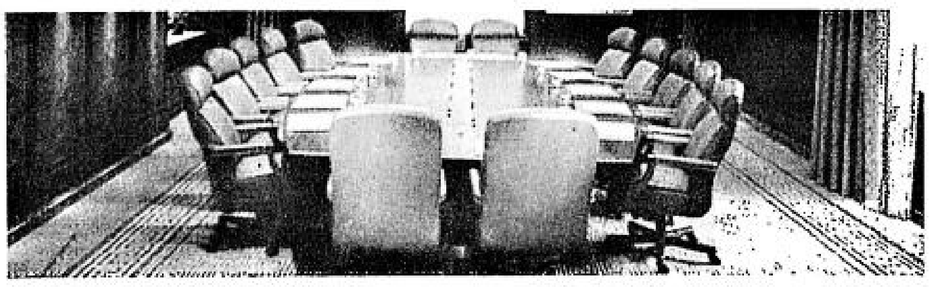
THE ELEGANT Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong is surrounded by ultra-modern skyscrapers.



THE INDOOR penthouse pool in the fully-equipped private Health Center

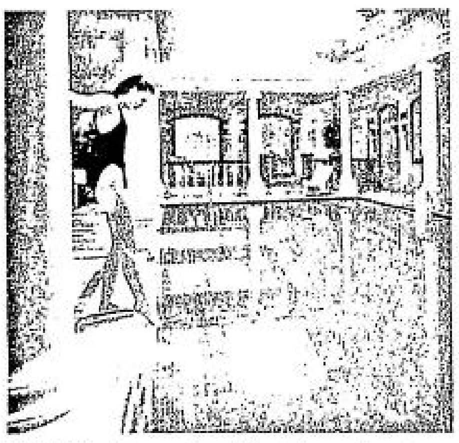


MANDARIN Oriental Hotel's eye-catching lobby is a showcase of Asian antiques.



MEETINGS IN STYLE. The hotel's superb board room overlooks the Statue Square and Victoria Harbour.

A birthday celebration in Hong Kong

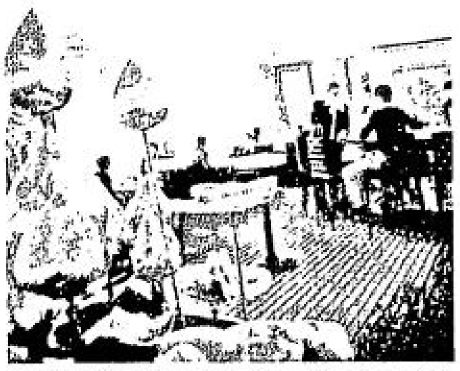


WHAT better way to relieve stress than a swim in the penthouse Roman pool?

THE CLIPPER Lounge serves international lunch and dinner buffets and is famed for its afternoon high tea.

MANDARIN ORIENTAL
HONG KONG

A HAPPY face to greet your stay



THE TRENDY Vong bar, Hong Kong's coolest meeting place for cocktails

THE POPULAR Man Wah serves Hong Kong's finest Cantonese food and boasts of impeccable service and an unrivaled view of the city.

WITHOUT BATTING AN EYELASH

Maurice Arcache

Photos by **Alex Van Hagen** on **Kodak Max**

JETTING off to Hong Kong is always such a thrill. Flying on our very own Philippine Airlines, we got to my all-time favorite destination in Asia in one hour and 20 minutes.

Our gang of 10 decided that Hong Kong was the ideal place to celebrate the birthday of that woman of style, beauty and know-how, **Maripi Muscat**. We dashed into our PAL flight, knowing that whether you are flying business or economy, you will be pampered and cared for with a smile by the superb crew, dahlings.

Our partying group landed smoothly after a fabulous flight at the colossal Chek Lap Kok International airport, some 34 km from the hotel. The journey took less than an hour in Mandarin Hotel's sleek Mercedez-Benz cars.

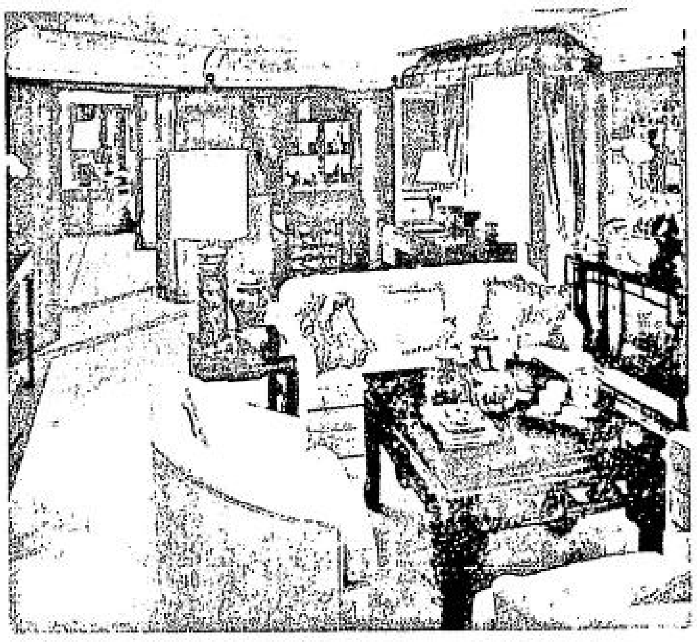
Of course, you can also get to the city quickly on the so-convenient Airport Express train that reaches Central in less than 30 minutes. The station is just five minutes away from the Mandarin Oriental Hong Kong.

Efficient

The Airport Concierge service, operated by Worldwide Flight Services, allows Mandarin Oriental representatives to greet guests upon disembarking. Guests are then driven through the airport on an electric golf cart, chaperoned through immigration and customs, then whisked off to a waiting car without worrying about luggage. Mandarin efficiency, dahlings.

I met Mandarin's brilliant public relations manager and mega secret weapon, amiable **Jane Li**, during breakfast the next morning at the popular Clipper Lounge. We then toured the Mandarin's 12 gorgeous luxury suites, each decorated according to a specific theme. The most prestigious is the fabulous, breathtaking Mandarin Suite. We also saw the eye-catching Tamar Suite and chi-chi Macau Suite, as well as the Victoria, Bauhinia and Pine Suites, and smaller ones.

We visited seven restaurants and bars. Our first stop was Vong that serves contemporary French food with Asian touches. Its specialties include the signature Black Plate (a selection of five appetizers) and the Warm Valrhona Chocolate Cake. Vong can also be found at the Mandarin in New York, London and Chicago, where it just opened.



ONE of Mandarin's 12 gorgeous suites

Excellent Cantonese food

Second stop was the Man Wah, where you can get excellent Cantonese food. Try their superb, sautéed fillet of sole with green vegetables in black bean sauce, steamed crab claws and stuffed prawns in supreme sauce and poached pear in tangerine tea. On weekends and public holidays, you can go gaga over their yummy dimsums.

The Mandarin Grill is famous for power lunches and breakfasts. You could find yourself sitting next to business magnates, tycoons, taipans and celebrities.

The Chinnery Bar specializes in British-inspired food. Its large selection of single malt whiskies is one of the most extensive in Asia. Chinnery is known for its "bangers and mash," Stilton soup and steak, and kidney pie, a big favorite with regular diners.

The all-day café is for more casual dining, while the Clipper Lounge is patronized for its healthy breakfast. The Cohiba Cigar Divan, with its steady supply of Havanas, is for cigar aficionados.

The café is also a popular late-night dining spot, with last orders taken at 12:45 a.m. You can't go wrong with the Café Caesar Salad, Singapore Noodles and the yummy Hainanese Chicken Rice, plus the calorific, superb ginger creme brulée with lemon lime sorbet.

By reservation only

On our second evening in the fab city, we had an excellent dinner at the by-reservation-only world-class Spoon Restaurant of the International Hotel (formerly Regent), hosted by the birthday gal's steadier-than-steady escort, **Johnny Velasquez** (but that's another story). Our gang then headed straight away to the swinging Captain's Bar of the Mandarin, natch, popular for its lunchtime buffet and drinks at the end of a working day. A performance by the hotel's fantastic Tony Carpio Band added to a fantastic evening.

We all hit the dance floor and rocked the place till closing time at 1:45 a.m., too early by Manila standards. We lingered on till the lights started to dim slowly, a hint for us to move to another venue—my terrific room with a balcony that looked out to the Kowloon side.

BRILLIANT public relations manager Jane Li

PETER French, mega GM of Mandarin Oriental and the Excelsior

MANDARIN Group's public relations manager, Sally de Souza

Right at the heart of a vibrant, pulsating, ever-changing and eye-catching city, the *tres* elegant Mandarin Oriental Hotel Hong Kong has one of the best locations. The financial district is just steps away, while around the corner are Hong Kong's most exciting and innovative restaurants and super fun nightlife. Super air-conditioned walkways link the hotel to the city's most luxurious shopping malls, *palanggas*.

Even the Star Ferry is just a couple of minutes away, while an MRT (Mass Railway Transit) station is just outside the hotel. The MRT connects with the KCR (Kowloon-Canton Railway).

The Mandarin's renowned Health Centre has an indoor marble swimming pool in the style of a Roman spa. The award-winning gymnasium has a weight room and a variety of high-tech machines, including 10 treadmills, each with its own television monitor and headset. A choice of massages is also offered, which can be taken together with deep-cleansing facials. This has to be really experienced, dahlings.

For weary travelers, the "Jet Lag Package" combines massage and reflexology. The Stress Solution and Body and Soul Rejuvenator packages relax and revive the body.

They sure revived me, *apres* three days of dining and partying.

At the Cake Shop, signature items include Mandarin Oriental's de-li-cious but so fattening cheesecake, chocolate truffle cake (there goes my South Beach diet), homemade XO sauce and famous Rose Petal jam (the recipe for which is requested worldwide). **Freddie Olbes** wasted no time and bought several big jars of the renowned jam.

Tea at the Clipper Lounge is an institution in Hong Kong. The tradition began over 30 years ago, and reservations for tea are hard to get. I noticed long queues snaking down the staircase from 3 p.m.

New property

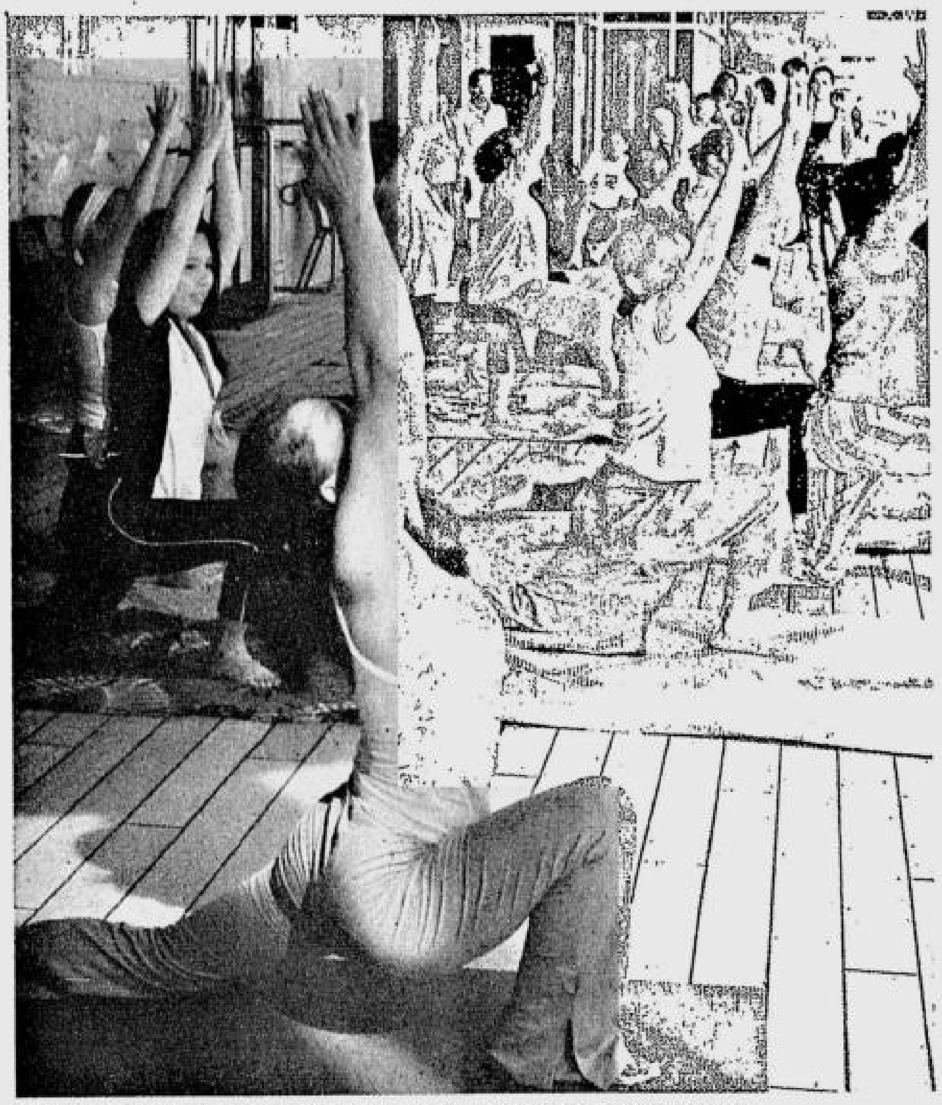
"Mandarin Oriental will also manage a new, super luxurious hotel (being) planned... in the heart of Hong Kong's fashion, entertainment and shopping district. The 114-room property will be at The Landmark, one of Hong Kong's most successful commercial complexes," Jane told us.

Pity we didn't get to meet the Mandarin Group's public relations manager, super nice **Sally de Souza**, who was out of town. We learned from **Jane Li** that Sally knew many of our global journalist contacts, having been a freelance writer and editor for many Hong Kong publications. She worked as a journalist for more than 15 years before joining Mandarin Hong Kong as director of communication in 2000.

The Mandarin Oriental's and The Excelsior's new general manager is the experienced and well-known **Peter French**, who was executive vice president and managing director of The Carlyle Hotel New York, and GM of the Grosvenor House Hotel in London. Mr. French made sure we had a great stay at the hotel. We certainly did.

But all good things must come to an end. We waved goodbye to our hostess and escort in the hotel, the one-of-a kind Jane Li, as we were driven in the hotel's *tres* chic Mercedez-Benz limo back to the airport for the trip home in our wow Philippine Airlines, *naturellement*.

Call Jane Li, public relations manager, Mandarin Oriental, Hong Kong, at +852 28254850, fax +852 25301082, or e-mail janel@mohg.com. Visit www.mandarinoriental.com.



REACH UP. Participants raise their arms while practicing proper breathing.

DOVE MOMENT. Women, and men, too, experience mental focus and calmness during the yoga session.

Cruising to fitness and well-being

From page C1

heard saying: "I am blown away by the physical, spiritual and mental benefits provided by my yoga practice. While on the mat, I experienced mental focus and calmness, sweat (or the rain) poured down my face, energy centers became alive and I bent and twisted my body in ways I never thought possible."

Leoncio said: "It was truly a Dove moment for everyone. Despite the rains, they stayed on... and allowed themselves to be rejuvenated."

Breathing lessons

The next yoga exercise was held at the ship's lobby deck because of a storm on the way back to Singapore from Phuket. This time, Lipat taught the benefits of proper breathing.

Lipat said breathing was the interaction between a person's inner self and the atmosphere. When people breathe, she said, they absorbed physical substances as well as the surrounding reality. She said proper breathing was essential for both physical and psychological well-being.

"Breathing in a free, uninhibited way released stored feelings in the body and mind," Lipat said.

Participants, now all women, sat on woven mats, clasped their hands, extended their arms up overhead while coordinating their breathing.

"We can easily apply proper breathing to life off the mat, whether making desired life transformations, facing a tough decision, or trying to complete a challenging project. (Proper breathing) can help keep you balanced and on track," Lipat said.

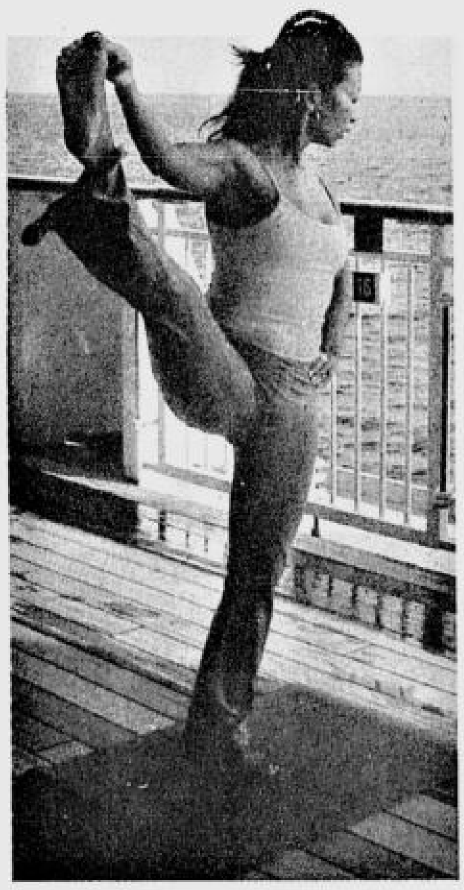
After the yoga exercises, some of the women rewarded themselves for their effort by getting a cold glass of fresh honeydew juice and the cheesecake from the nearest restaurant.

Others continued their workout by running several miles on the fitness center's treadmills.

Dove's "yoga at sea" definitely rejuvenated the participants, especially the women who were allowed to slow down and have the time to reconnect with themselves.

Call Star Cruises Phils. at 5215660 and 5268401; yoga expert Bela Lipat at 8170299.

E-mail the author at vbaga@inquirer.com.ph



THE SOULFUL YOGA INSTRUCTOR. Bela Lipat doing her "warm-up" poses

IRENE Leoncio, brand representative of Dove Phil. (left), and Marlene Pajanel, manager of Star Cruises Phil. and Guam

SO WHAT COKE ARE YOU, REALLY?

Did you know that it's easy to tell someone's character by the things he or she likes? Take the quiz below and be surprised how much your taste tells a lot about who you are and, most of all, what Coke will best refresh you.

What would you wear on a big date?
A. A classy, all-black ensemble from top to toe
B. Whatever's loose and comfortable
C. Preppy silhouette that's dominantly neutrals
D. Body-hugging that will show your assets

Who are the artists on your CD rack?
A. Maroon 5, Alicia Keys
B. Hoobastank, Incubus
C. Dashboard Confessional
D. Ministry of Sound, Ibiza

What do you read?
A. Newspaper and novels
B. Independent titles
C. Comics and sci-fi
D. Magazines and self-help books

How do you like your steak?
A. Well-done
B. Rare
C. Medium-rare
D. I don't eat steak

What is your dream cell phone?
A. The less complicated, the better
B. Something that no one else has
C. With lots of games and software to operate
D. Streamlined, with lots of stylish covers

What's you dream car?
A. Anything that has four wheels and drive
B. SUV
C. Beetle
D. Porsche

How will you pose in your yearbook photo?
A. Something that mommy would hang on the wall
B. Wacky and crazy, with tongue sticking out
C. You really don't care
D. Glamorous, almost like a magazine photo shoot

Now, the fun part. Below is an assessment of your personality profile. Find out which one you are based on your answers above. As a bonus, we've also written down which Coca-Cola best describes and suits you. After all, there's nothing like grabbing a Coke that'll refresh you the way you want it to.

Mostly A's
You're a classic. Everyone finds it easy to talk to you, and you get along well with almost everybody. You find it easy to get new friends, even in the most unlikely places.

So to speak, you're like the Regular Coke. The one that everyone has always loved.

Mostly B's
You're on the wild side. You like to explore new places, and you love the outdoors. You find satisfaction in experimenting, and is happy knowing that there's always something different to do.

If you were a Coke, you'd be Cherry Coke. There's always a cherry wild side in you!

Mostly C's
You've got a lot going for you coz you've got it just right. You always see the fun side of things. Easy-going and humorous, surely no party will be the same without you.

You're definitely a Vanilla Coke—you have just the right touch of vanilla.

Mostly D's
You're ultra sophisticated. You always strive to improve yourself. You go to the gym, eat healthy food, because you know they're good for you. You're a New Age phenomenon!

Coke Light best suits you. It's the same Coke but with less than 1 calorie, it's good for you.

No

sweet

talk.

The drinks pictured above are for the health-conscious.

Low calorie, and like this ad, completely sugar free.

"Coca-Cola light", "Royal", "Sprite", and the Dynamic Ribbon device are trademarks of The Coca-Cola Company. © 2004 The Coca-Cola Company

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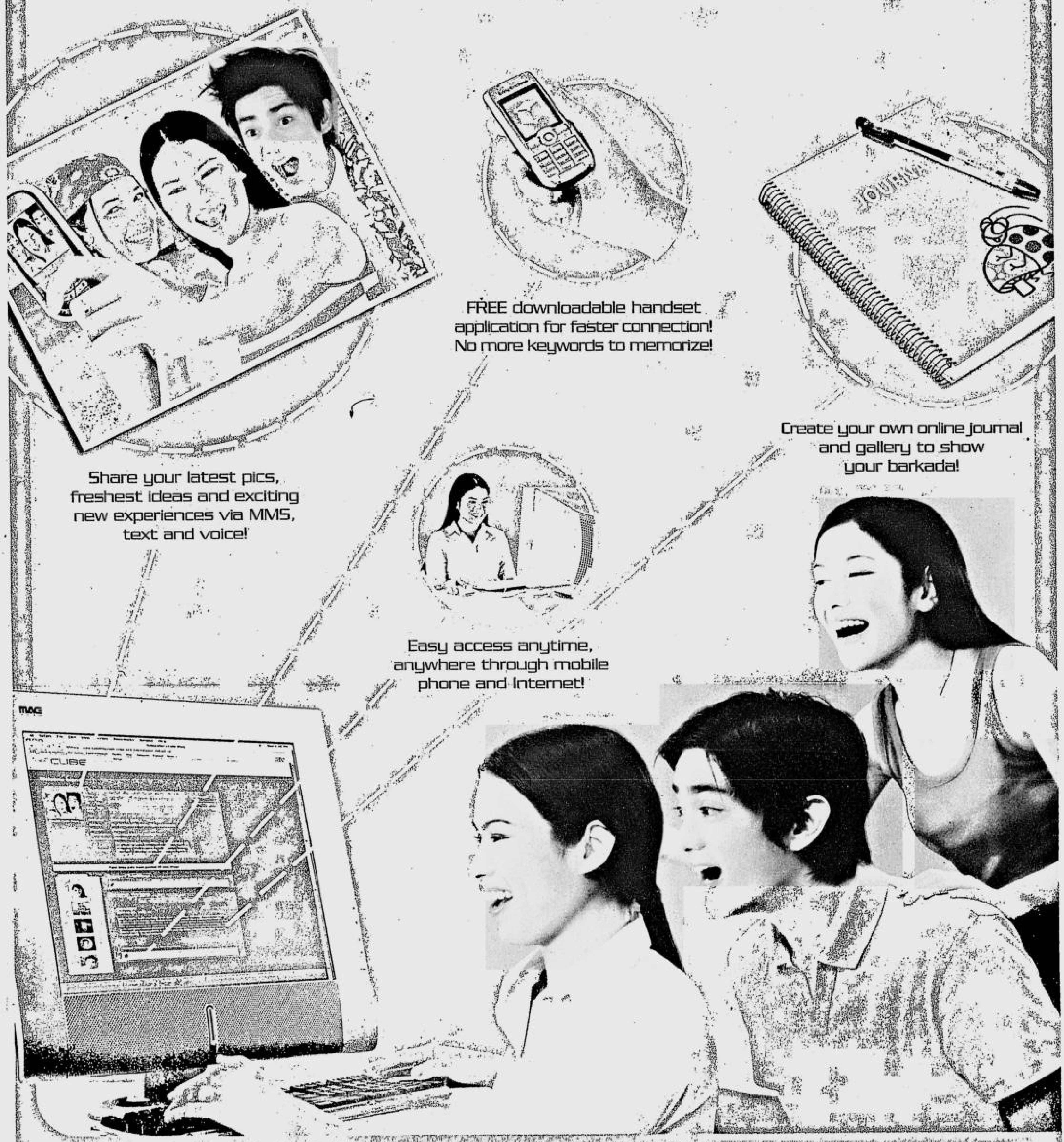
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THE FILIPINO shamans
/D3

Healing body and soul to cure a disease

INSIDE OUT

Cory Quirino

HOLISTIC medicine looks at a person as a whole entity—physically, emotionally, psychologically, spiritually—in drawing up the right treatment.

Therapies, alternative or natural as they are called, aims to manage not just the symptoms but the underlying cause of a disease. Mystical factors are involved in eastern procedures for treating a person as both a physical and spiritual entity.

Here's a look at some of them.

Reflexology. Used by ancient Egyptians and believed to have originated in China 5,000 years ago, reflexology is a technique of diagnosis and treatment involving the massage of the feet, hands and other parts of the body.

Dr. William Fitzgerald introduced reflexology in the West. He identified 10 zones (energy channels) as pathways of energy in a person. The zones ended at the feet.

Pain or discomfort in any part of the body could be relieved by applying pressure in the same zone. When a pathway is blocked, tenderness is felt in the feet and other body points. This indicates an ailment somewhere in the body.

By massaging the so-called reflex points, channels are cleared

HEALING/D3

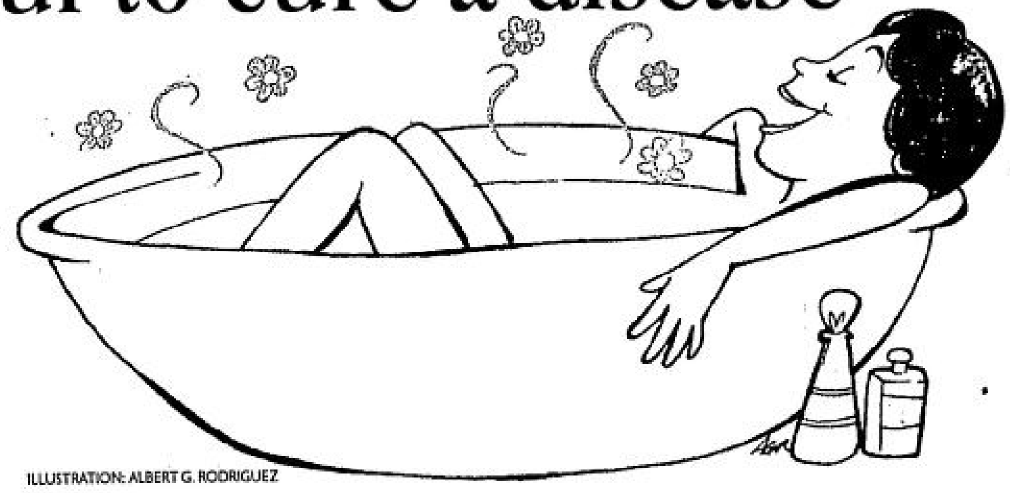
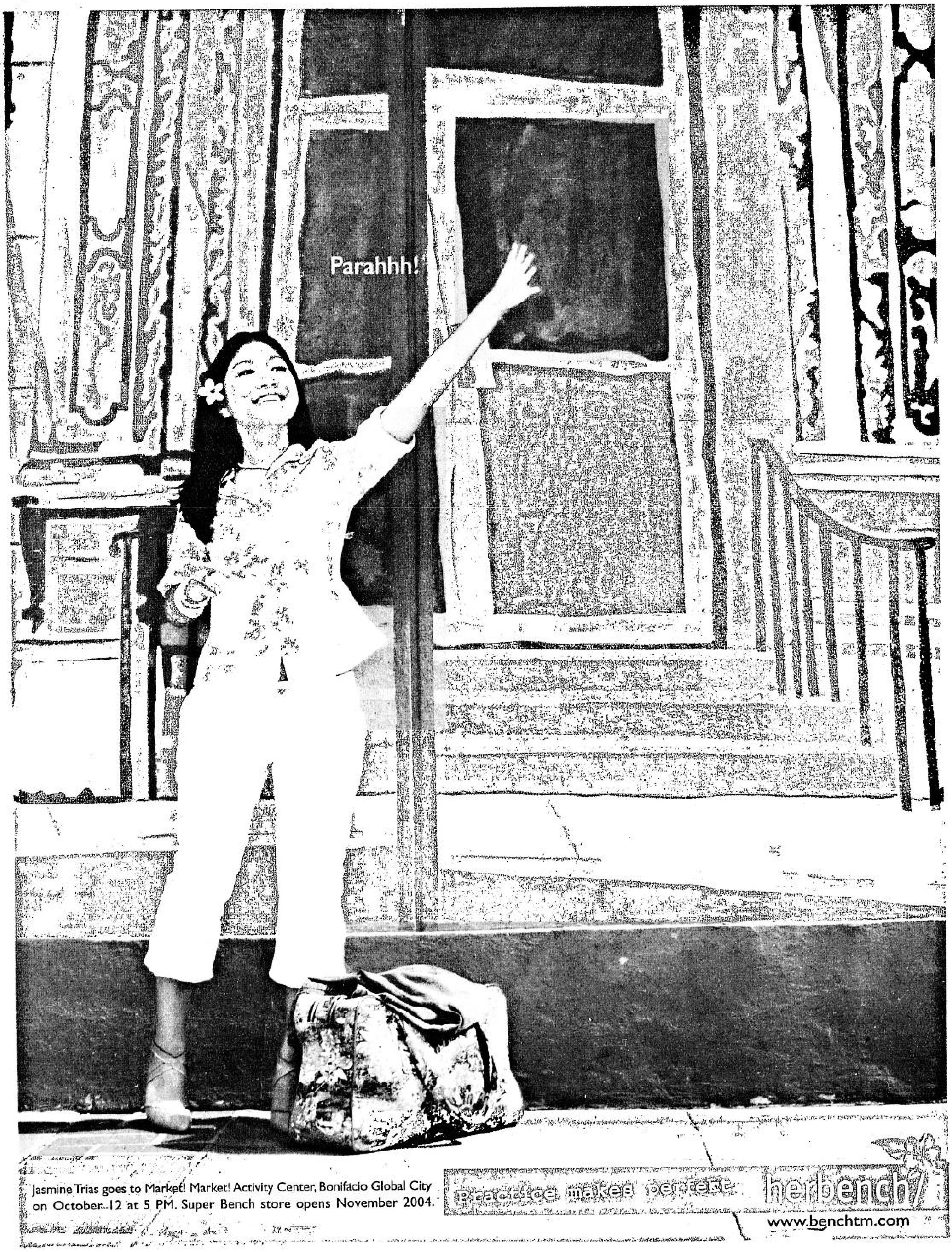


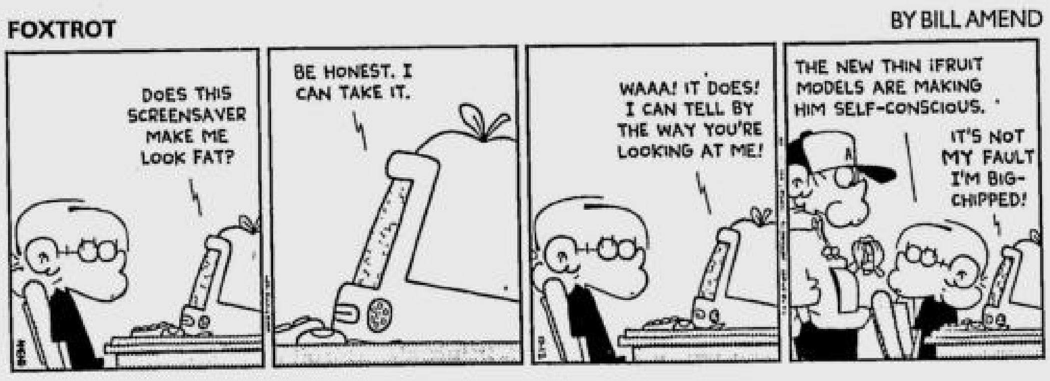
ILLUSTRATION: ALBERT G. RODRIGUEZ


Parahhh!
Practice makes perfect.
herbench/
www.benchtm.com

Jasmine Trias goes to Market! Market! Activity Center, Bonifacio Global City on October 12 at 5 PM. Super Bench store opens November 2004.

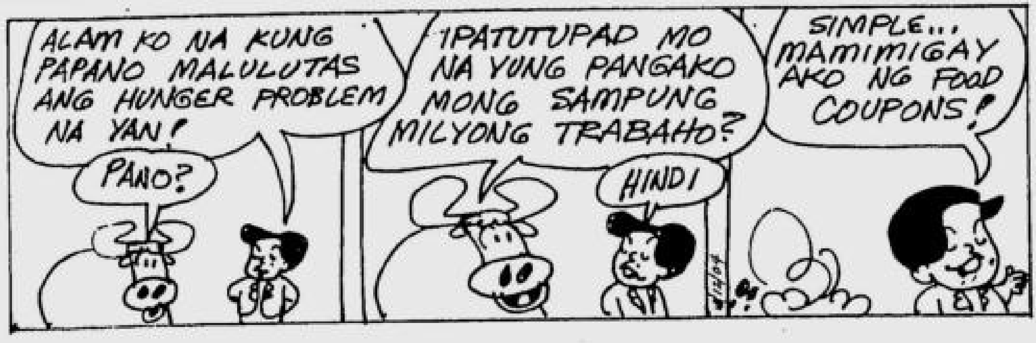
FOXTROT

BY BILL AMEND


DOES THIS SCREENSAVER MAKE ME LOOK FAT?
BE HONEST. I CAN TAKE IT.
WAAA! IT DOES! I CAN TELL BY THE WAY YOU'RE LOOKING AT ME!
THE NEW THIN IFRUIT MODELS ARE MAKING HIM SELF-CONSCIOUS.
IT'S NOT MY FAULT I'M BIG-CHIPPED!

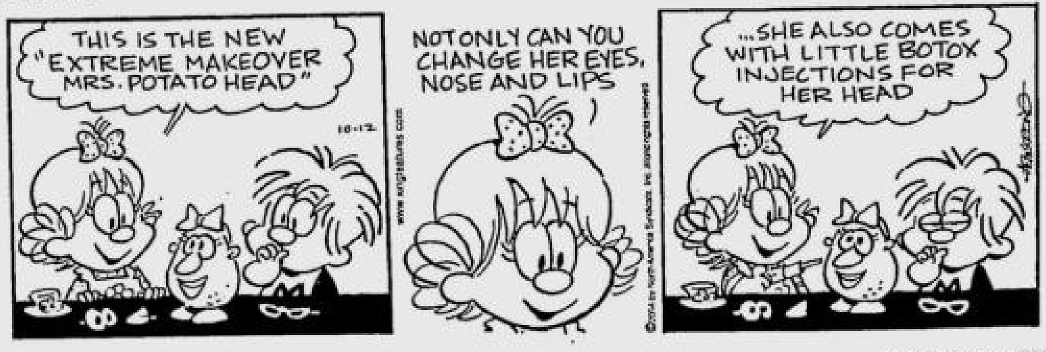
A. LIPIN

BY JESS ABRERA


ALAM KO NA KUNG PAPANO MALULUTAS ANG HUNGER PROBLEM NA YAN!
PANO?
IPATUTUPAD MO NA YUNG PANGAKO MONG SAMPUNG MILYONG TRABAHO?
HINDI
SIMPLE... MAMIMIGAY AKO NG FOOD COUPONS!

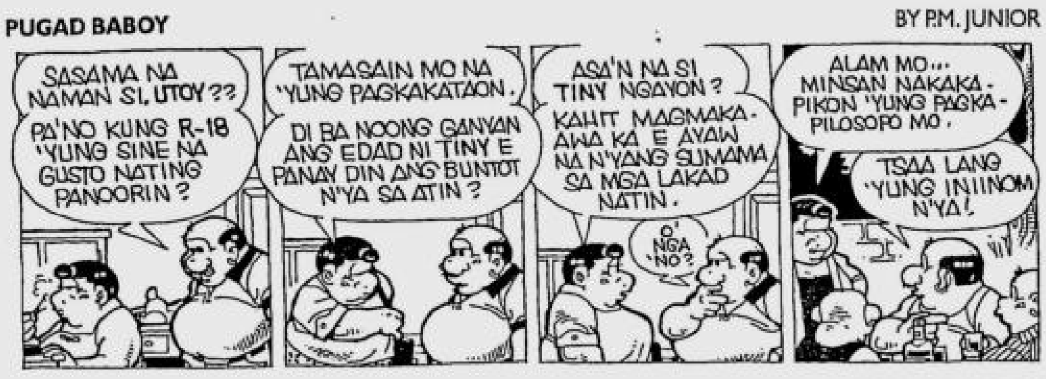
MARVIN

BY TOM ARMSTRONG


THIS IS THE NEW "EXTREME MAKEOVER MRS. POTATO HEAD"
10-12
NOT ONLY CAN YOU CHANGE HER EYES, NOSE AND LIPS
...SHE ALSO COMES WITH LITTLE BOTOX INJECTIONS FOR HER HEAD

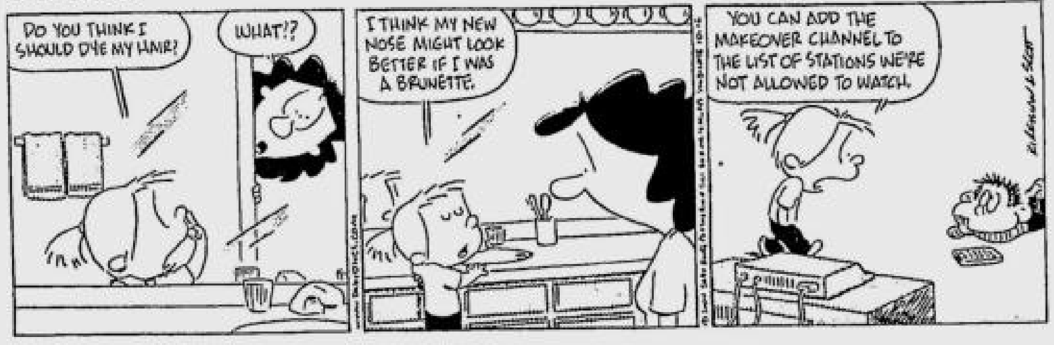
PUGAD BABOY

BY P.M. JUNIOR


SASAMA NA NAMAN SI UTOY??
PA'NO KUNG R-18 'YUNG SINE NA GUSTO NATING PANOORIN?
TAMASAIN MO NA 'YUNG PAGKAKATAON.
DI BA NOONG GANYAN ANG EDAD NI TINY E PANAY DIN ANG BUNTOT N'YA SA ATIN?
ASA'N NA SI TINY NGAYON?
KAHIT MAGMAKA-AWA KA E AYAW NA N'YANG SUMAMA SA MGA LAKAD NATIN.
O' NGA 'NO?
ALAM MO... MINSAN NAKAKA-PIKON 'YUNG PAGKA-PILOSOPO MO.
TSAA LANG 'YUNG INIINOM N'YA!

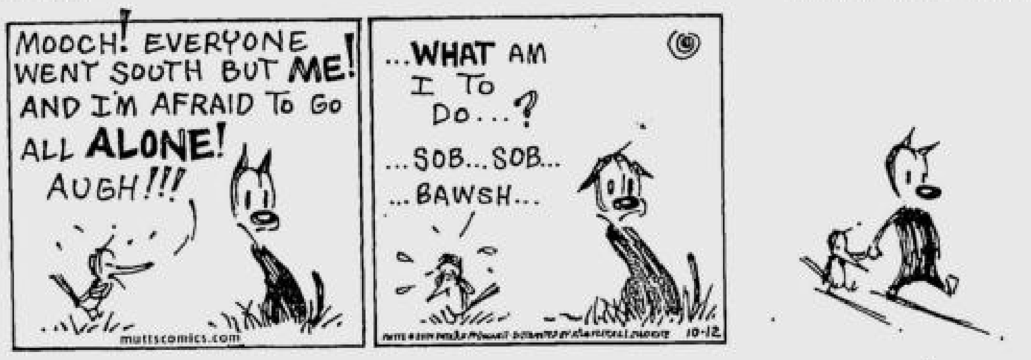
BABY BLUES

BY JERRY SCOTT


DO YOU THINK I SHOULD DYE MY HAIR?
WHAT!?
I THINK MY NEW NOSE MIGHT LOOK BETTER IF I WAS A BRUNETTE.
YOU CAN ADD THE MAKEOVER CHANNEL TO THE LIST OF STATIONS WE'RE NOT ALLOWED TO WATCH.

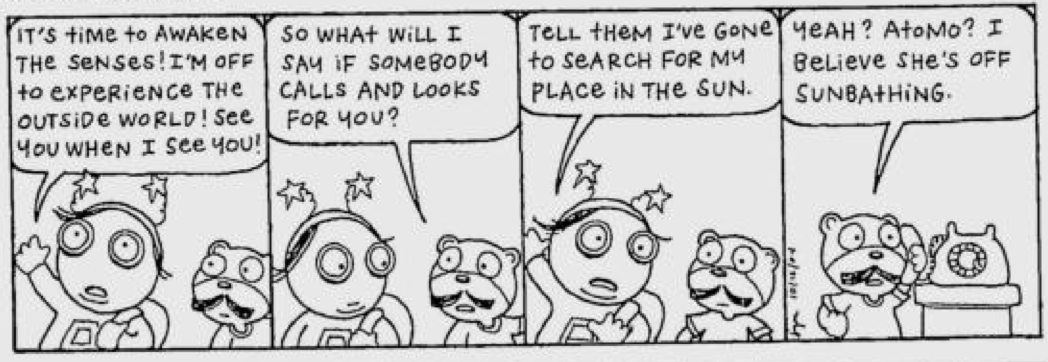
MUTTS

BY PATRICK McDONNELL


MOOCH! EVERYONE WENT SOUTH BUT ME! AND I'M AFRAID TO GO ALL ALONE! AUGH!!!
muttscomics.com
...WHAT AM I TO DO...?
...SOB...SOB... ...BAWSH...
10-12

ATOMO AND WEBOY

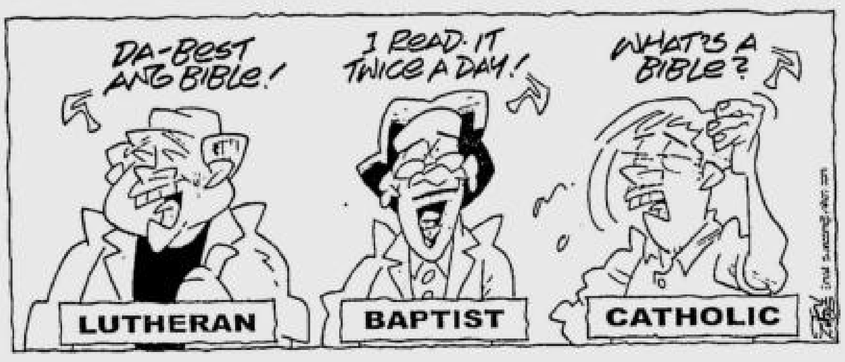
BY LYRA GARCELLANO


IT'S TIME TO AWAKEN THE SENSES! I'M OFF TO EXPERIENCE THE OUTSIDE WORLD! SEE YOU WHEN I SEE YOU!
SO WHAT WILL I SAY IF SOMEBODY CALLS AND LOOKS FOR YOU?
TELL THEM I'VE GONE TO SEARCH FOR MY PLACE IN THE SUN.
YEAH? ATOMO? I BELIEVE SHE'S OFF SUNBATHING.

DIVINE COMEDY

BY STEVEN PABALINAS

TATLONG PANELISTS ANG TINANONG KUNG BINABASA NILA ANG KANILANG MGA BIBLIA....


DA-BEST ANG BIBLE!
I READ IT TWICE A DAY!
WHAT'S A BIBLE?
LUTHERAN
BAPTIST
CATHOLIC

HOROSCOPE

BY FRANCIS DRAKE

YOU BORN TODAY: You have highly developed social skills. You are generous both literally and emotionally. People know they can count on you. You are quite comfortable being at the center of things. You have a good sense of money. You take pride in your work. This year new avenues will open up for you.
Birthdate of: Hugh Jackman, actor; Luciano Pavarotti, tenor; Kirk Cameron, actor.

ARIES (March 21 to April 19): Discussions with those who are close to you will be profound today. You won't settle for idle chitchat. You want to make changes for the better in your relationships.

TAURUS (April 20 to May 20): You have bright ideas about how to improve your job today. You want to repair what needs fixing. Encourage others to follow your lead in improving your work environment.

GEMINI (May 21 to June 20): You feel quite intensely about a romantic situation. This could be ardent, or it could be a mild crush. Either way, your heart is going pitter-patter today—that's for sure!

CANCER (June 21 to July 22): This is an excellent day to clean up things at home. Get rid of garbage and items you no longer use. Streamline your belongings. Be ruthless. Just throw stuff out!

LEO (July 23 to Aug. 22): You're extremely persuasive if you want anything today. You seem to know exactly what to say to achieve your objective. It's as if you have X-ray vision into other people's minds.

VIRGO (Aug. 23 to Sept. 22): You're willing to spend money to look better and feel better. You're in the mood to turn over a new leaf!

LIBRA (Sept. 23 to Oct. 22): You have a lot of charisma and power today. You can magnetize others to you. Whatever you do, you are in charge. (This power is brief—use it as best you can.)

SCORPIO (Oct. 23 to Nov. 21): There's a good chance that juicy secrets will come your way today. Fortunately, by nature you are discreet. (Wild horses can't drag anything out of you.)

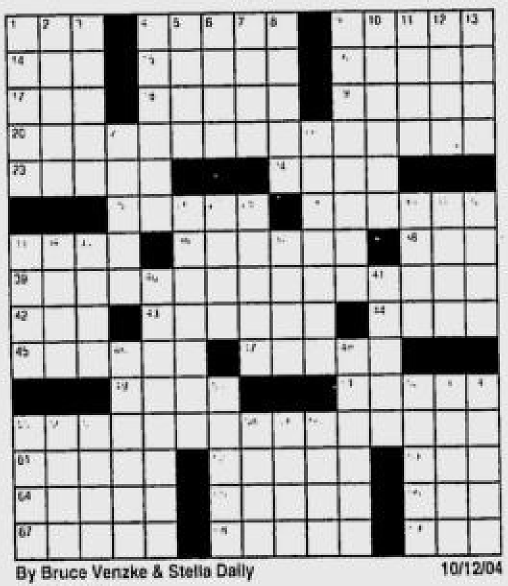
SAGITTARIUS (Nov. 22 to Dec. 21): You might meet somebody quite powerful today. Or perhaps, you're the power hitter others are meeting! Either way, encounters with people are meaningful and profound.

CAPRICORN (Dec. 22 to Jan. 19): This is the day to introduce changes and reform where you have been unhappy or putting up with things. Seize any opportunity to wield your creative powers. Improve things for others as well as yourself.

AQUARIUS (Jan. 20 to Feb. 18): You're concerned with serious ideas connected with philosophy, politics and religion today. But you want to go beyond ideas. You want to see changes for the better in the world.

PISCES (Feb. 19 to March 20): Your ability to research is phenomenal today. You can sleuth out any answer to any question. You attract secrets to you now.

DAILY CROSSWORD

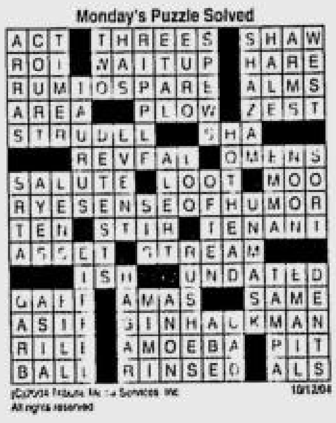


By Bruce Venzke & Stella Daily
Madison, WI
10/12/04

ACROSS
1 Fixed
4 Relative by marriage
9 Bargains
14 Hurler's stat
15 Watered fabric
16 Spread rumors
17 Escort's offer
18 Korean seaport
19 Mea __ (my fault)
20 Two high-rankers
23 Informal language
24 Horse's pace
25 Fed the kitty
29 __-down cake
33 Actor Parker
36 Actress de Carlo
38 Book before Nah.
39 Two TV advice-givers
42 Supermarket grp.
43 Of teeth
44 Exxon, once
45 Enter!
47 Wound yarn
49 Halt
51 Clothes lines?
55 Two diet-food claims
61 Like a wild crowd
62 Use elbow grease
63 Smelter input
64 Musical beat
65 Alternative to a steam
66 Poem of praise
67 Insert securely
68 Beaver-like?
69 Service bonus

DOWN
1 Chairs
2 Actor Flynn
3 MacDill AFB city
4 Call into question
5 Part of speech
6 Framed Mona
7 Island off Galway
8 George of "Cheers"
9 Infamous 1971 air pirate
10 Becomes violently active
11 "__ Lang Syne"
12 Ancient Chinese poet
13 Men only
21 Crunch and grind
22 Rollaway bed
26 "Take comfort in our strength" brand
27 Author Connell
28 Things to avoid
30 "__ in the Morning"
31 Morse Code sounds
32 Sound on the rebound
33 Bank security letters
34 Cogito __ sum
35 Electronic junk mail
37 Sask. neighbor
40 Race to Nome
41 Extend a subscription
46 Ford SUV
48 Weather-map line
50 Old hat
52 Underway
53 __ Gras
54 Precipitous
55 Alter the bell
56 Provo neighbor
57 Natural incubator
58 March Madness org.
59 Narcotic
60 "Clair de __"

Monday's Puzzle Solved



ACT■THREES■SHAW
ROI■WAITUP■HARE
RUMIOSPARE■ALMS
AREA■■PLOW■ZEST
STRUDEL■■SHA■■■
■■■REVEAL■OMENS
SALUTE■LOOT■MOO
RYESENSEOFHUMOR
TEN■STIR■TENANT
ASSET■STREAM■■■
■■■ISH■■UNDATED
GAFF■AMAS■■SAME
ASIF■GINHALKMAN
RILE■AMOEBA■PIT
BALI■RINSED■ALS

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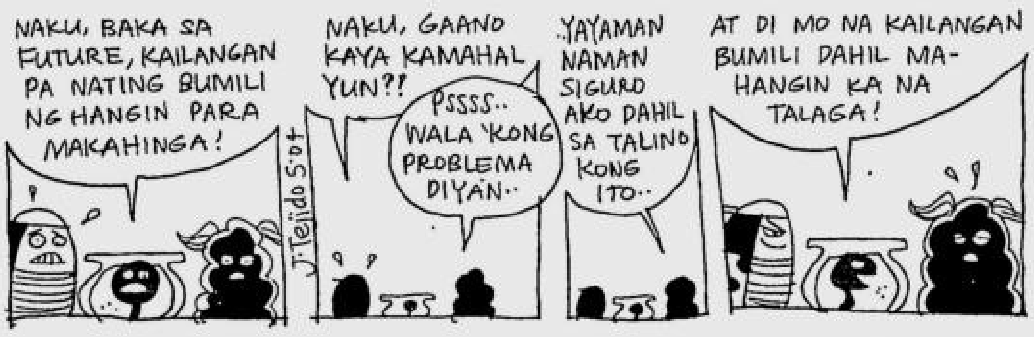
10/12/04

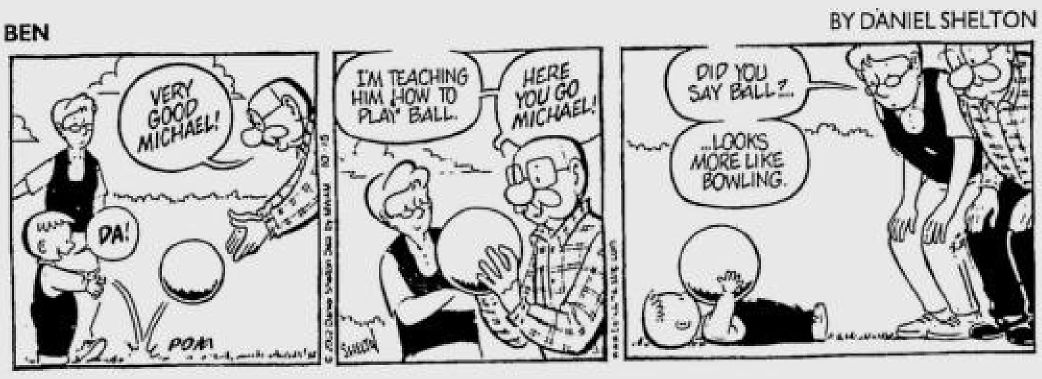
MIKROKOSMOS

BY JOMIKE TEJIDO


NAKU, BAKA SA FUTURE, KAILANGAN PA NATING BUMILI NG HANGIN PARA MAKAHINGA!
J. Tejido 5'04
NAKU, GAANO KAYA KAMAHAL YUN?!
PSSSS.. WALA 'KONG PROBLEMA DIYAN..
YAYAMAN NAMAN SIGURO AKO DAHIL SA TALINO KONG ITO..
AT DI MO NA KAILANGAN BUMILI DAHIL MA-HANGIN KA NA TALAGA!

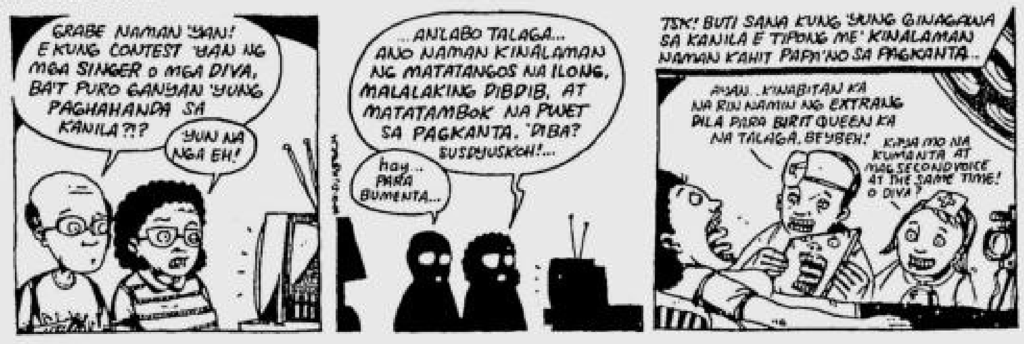
BEN

BY DANIEL SHELTON


VERY GOOD MICHAEL!
DA!
POM
I'M TEACHING HIM HOW TO PLAY BALL.
HERE YOU GO MICHAEL!
DID YOU SAY BALL?
...LOOKS MORE LIKE BOWLING.

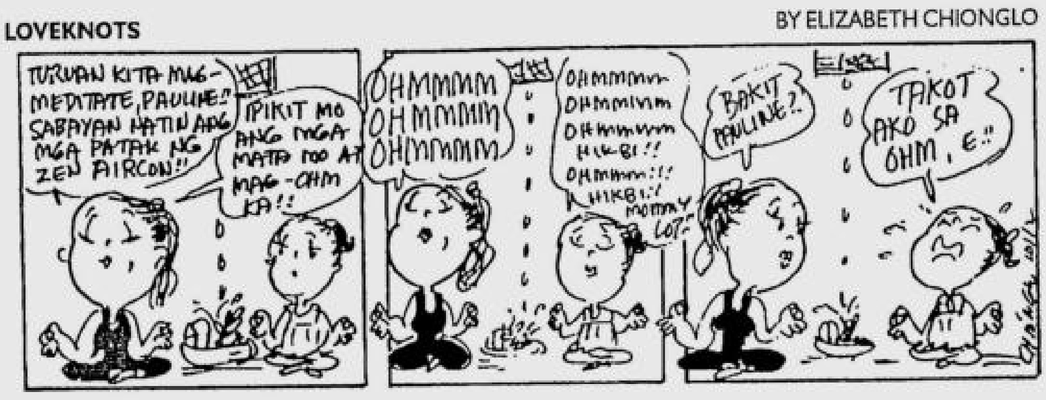
KIKO MACHINE

BY MANIX ABRERA


GRABE NAMAN 'YAN! E KUNG CONTEST 'YAN NG MGA SINGER O MGA DIVA, BA'T PURO GANYAN 'YUNG PAGHAHANDA SA KANILA?!?
'YUN NA NGA EH!
...ANLABO TALAGA... ANO NAMAN KINALAMAN NG MATATANGOS NA ILONG, MALALAKING DIBDIB, AT MATATAMBOK NA PWET SA PAGKANTA. 'DIBA? SUSMYUSKOH!...
hay... PARA BUMENTA...
TSK! BUTI SANA KUNG 'YUNG GINAGAWA SA KANILA E TIPONG ME' KINALAMAN NAMAN KAHIT PAPA'NO SA PAGKANTA...
AYAN...KINABITAN KA NA RIN NAMIN NG EXTRANG DILA PARA BIRIT QUEEN KA NA TALAGA, BEYBEH!
KAYA MO NA KUMANTA AT MAG SECOND VOICE AT THE SAME TIME! O DIVA?

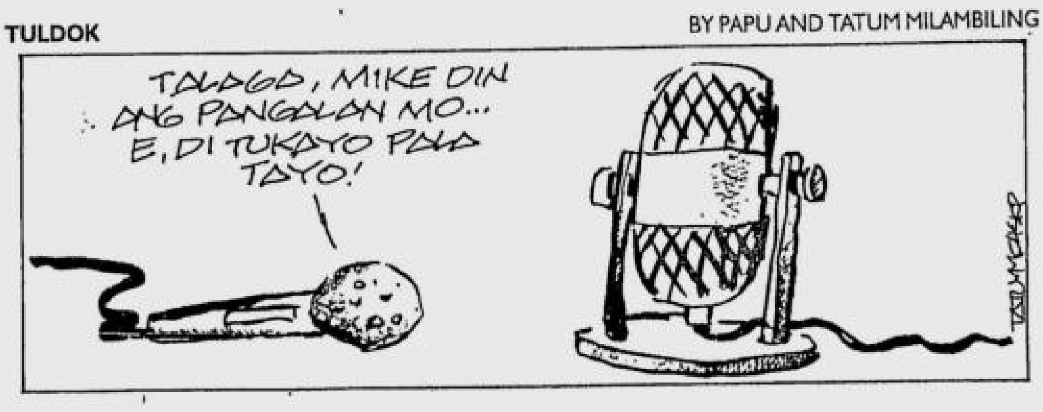
LOVEKNOTS

BY ELIZABETH CHIONGLO


TURUAN KITA MAG-MEDITATE, PAULINE! SABAYAN NATIN ANG MGA PATAK NG ZEN AIRCON!!
IPIKIT MO ANG MGA MATA MO AT MAG-OHM KA!!
OHMMMM OHMMMM OHMMMM
OHMMMM OHMMMM OHMMMM HIKBI!! OHMMM!!! HIKBI!! MOMMY LOT!
BAKIT PAULINE?
TAKOT AKO SA OHM, E!!

TULDOK

BY PAPU AND TATUM MILAMBILING


TALAGA, MIKE DIN ANG PANGALAN MO... E, DI TUKAYO PALA TAYO!

Shamanism in the Philippines

Part I

IF we look at the traditional definition of shamanism and its practice in the western context, it would seem that the Philippines does not have any shamanic tradition or practice.

What does shamanism consist of in the western concept? It consists of power animals, drums and rattles and the shamanic journey into another world. Usually this is done by the shaman for healing purposes. That's why a shaman is also a medicine man or healer.

But Philippine healers do not do such things. The practices are unfamiliar to them.

Is it correct to talk of Philippine shamanism? Does it exist? The answer is yes, if we define shamanism in its broader context.

According to one authority on the subject, "A shaman is a man or woman who enters an altered state of consciousness at will to contact and utilize an ordinarily hidden reality to acquire knowledge, power and to help other persons. A shaman has at least one spirit in his personal service."

Viewed this way, certain types of Philippine healers or medicine people (fit the description). They are called by many names, the most common being faith or spiritual healers. The healers are Christian spiritualists.

Spiritualism in the Philippines developed differently from that in the West. In the West, it was concerned mainly with proving if the human soul survives physical death.

The Filipino does not question that at all, convinced his soul is immortal and will live on after death. So his concern is more practical: What can the spirit do to help the living?

This is why spiritualism in the Philippines is deeply associated with healing. Spirit helpers are called upon to help the sick, not to prove whether there's life after death.

Almost all faith healers I've met are Christian "spiritists" of one type or another. They heal with the help of spirit guides who are often identified by them as Christian saints, if not Jesus Christ himself. The essence of Philippine shamanism is in the strong belief or faith in a spiritual world (that can) be seen and tapped with proper training, discipline and invocation using power words.

Asean shamanic heritage

Is there a common shamanic tradition... throughout Southeast Asia? The question was prompted by an intriguing incident in Bali, Indonesia, in 1984.

I spent a few days in Bali after the 2nd International Conference on Traditional Asian Medicine in Surabaya, where I spoke on faith healers of the Philippines.

I went to the house of a *dukon* (Indonesian for healer or medicine man), the equivalent of a *bomo* in Malaysia and *albulario* in the Philippines.

The *dukon*'s son, a supervisor in a well-known Bali hotel, said healers like his father (had) a magical stone that created a rattling sound when shaken. The stone, according to him, could be used for medical diagnosis. It was commonly used, however, (to foretell) if a projected trip or journey would turn out well or not. If the stone did not make a sound when shaken, the (trip) should (be canceled).

The *dukon*'s son (said the) stone was called *bato katsok*. I was intrigued because some Filipino healers and those who believed in *anting-anting* (used) a similar stone called *bato kalog*.

Both the stone's name and usage were strikingly similar. Could there be other esoteric practices in the two countries and, perhaps, (in the rest of) Southeast Asia that were similar? I believe so.

INNER AWARENESS

Jaime T. Licauco

Filipinos heal with the help of spirit guides, often identified as Christian saints, if not Jesus Christ himself

For instance, ritualistic firewalking is practiced in Indonesia and the Philippines, though the Indonesians are more spectacular.

Herb doctors have very similar practices and beliefs in Malaysia, Indonesia, the Philippines and Thailand, although the religion and outer cultures vary widely. Malaysia and Indonesia are predominantly Muslim (except Bali, which is Hindu), Thailand is predominantly Buddhist, while the Philippines is predominantly Christian.

It seems there is a common esoteric or shamanic thread linking together the neighboring nations, indicating a possible single origin. Further research into the countries' native beliefs, practices and traditions may unearth more similarities in the region's basic psyche.

Unfortunately, no such common research or networking in the shamanic or psychic field exists even on an individual or informal basis. All efforts of countries in the region are confined to educational, economic, scientific, cultural and athletic cooperation. Even culture is defined to exclude the very rich esoteric or occult tradition of the region.

In the Philippines especially, with its heavily Christian orientation, there is a very strong prejudice against studies of shamanism and of the unknown, little realizing that the Christian Bible itself is replete with actual examples of and references to shamanic or psychic phenomena.

Despite such prejudice, not only of the religious but also academic and scientific communities, the esoteric or shamanic tradition of our country flourishes and grows stronger.

The same is happening in other parts of the region, judging from published reports.

Jaime T. Licauco will conduct a two-day seminar on "Whole Brain Thinking for the Entrepreneurial Mind," Nov. 11 and 12, AIM Conference Center, Paseo de Roxas, Makati. Call 8427148 or 0917-9295432

Osteoporosis : Getting shorter as you get older?

Osteoporosis is a bone disorder which starts to present its symptoms among women in postmenopause or after estrogen production in the body has stopped. It is characterized by the loss of bone mass. The bone shows reduced density and strength.

Postmenopausal women start to lose bone by as much as 3% of total bone density in each of the first five years after menopause and again at a rate of 1% per year after that.

Some start to lose height and develop the "dowager's hump" or the stoop or curvature of the spine often seen in elderly women. This is commonly caused by fractured vertebrae resulting from thinning bones. Risk factors in osteoporosis include family history, early menopause (natural or surgical), heavy use of alcohol and caffeine, smoking and low dietary calcium intake.

The symptoms of osteoporosis start to show only after it has reached an advanced stage. To be protected from osteoporosis, it is important to learn your family history and adapt a healthy lifestyle as early as possible.

Women can also undergo Menopausal Therapy (MT). One such therapy involves the use of STEAR (Selective Tissue Estrogenic Activity Regulator). It is an estrogenic, progestogenic and androgenic compound that protects bones and relieves menopausal symptoms without having the undesired adverse effects on the breast and the lining of the uterus which is usually associated with other MT. STEAR is the only MT with androgenic activity, thus it is able to improve mood and libido among postmenopausal women.

Osteoporosis can be prevented. It is important that women maintain ideal body weight, exercise regularly, eat calcium-rich foods and take daily doses of 1200 mg. of calcium supplements.

Visit your doctor regularly and do the routine checks for your bone at least once a year after you reach the age of 40.

For questions or suggestions please email **livial@organon.ph** or text **0917-8523350.**

Gym swap promo

CLARK Hatch Fitness Center and Spa will hold a special event called "Boxing Day" on Oct. 16 at 1 p.m.

The event celebrates Clark Hatch's 39 years in the business, establishing over 60 clubs in 15 different countries.

It will highlight the club's promo for the month—the Gym Swap. Simply show your membership card in other gyms and you will enjoy waived entry and administration fee, free Clark Hatch Gym Bag and drinking bottle, free three personal training sessions and one-month free membership.

Event activities include self-defense demonstrations, punch bag box aero class, aikido demo/class, circuit class-boxing and one-on-one interactive boxing class.

Clark Hatch Fitness Center and Spa is at 220 Wilson St., Greenhills, San Juan. Call 7243694 or 7264425.

Horseback riding club in Lucena City

THE SOUTH Waters Marina Country Club and Farm's horseback riding grounds in Lucena City will be unveiled today. Horseback riders and enthusiasts are in for a day of fun and excitement as the event showcases the latest trends in developing an ideal, eco-friendly and sustainable country club.

Leading the opening rites as principal sponsor is newly appointed PCSO chair Serge Valencia, with international equestrienne Mikee Cojuangco-Jaworski, chair of Rustan's Group of Co. Ambassador Bienvenido Tantoco Sr., Lucena City Mayor Ramon Talaga, Quezon Province Gov. Wilfredo Enverga and Rep. Proceso Alcala.

The club's master planner is Sta. Lucia Realty Development, headed by South Waters director Excy Robles and president Jose Morato.

The horseback riding grounds of South Waters Marina Country Club and Farm is at Teachers Village, Barangay Cotta Ibabang Iyam, Quezon Avenue, Lucena City. Call (042) 3737573, 9211104 (Manila office); or visit 87 Scout Fuentebella St., Morato Avenue, QC.

SAY GOODBYE TO DARK SCAR FOREVER!
09173787955

Healing body and soul to cure a disease

From page D1

while slowly (sometimes immediately) restoring energy flow and healing. This treatment does not require any kind of medicine.

In a manner similar to acupuncture, it seems that reflexology stimulates (using finger pressure) reflex points that in turn releases endorphins (pain-relieving compounds in the brain that are also called feel-good hormones for having an effect that has been likened to morphine).

Dr. Peter Wong, a reflexologist from Hong Kong, is the son of a Chinese herbalist. He grew up in an atmosphere of healing. A teacher of Taoist Chi Kong, a meditative way to relaxation and healing, he decided to specialize in reflexology.

Now a Makati resident, his special practice has brought healing to many and improved the quality of their lives.

His most challenging case was a 12-year-old with leukemia. Given only one year to live, her parents decided to complement conventional medicine with reflexology. Her continuous treatment (over a year now) has given her a new lease on life.

Success stories are numerous—from a 75-year-old man who suffered a stroke and was unable to walk, to a 38-year-old woman who could not get pregnant, to a 35-year-old businesswoman whose menstruation that had stopped was restored, to my own chronic sinusitis.

Hydrotheraphy. The use of water to heal and alleviate ailments has been practiced since ancient times by the Greeks, Romans and Turks.

Hot water or steam makes blood vessels dilate, opens up the pores of the skin, induces perspiration and relaxes the muscles. A cold shower does the opposite and refreshes the body. It causes blood vessels in the skin to close up and blood is diverted to internal organs.

- Hot baths. A temperature of between 36.5-40°C (98-104°F) is best for relaxing the muscles. Five minutes immersion is enough to achieve beneficial results. A hot bath is like a sedative. Add five drops of lavender/rose oil to enhance relaxation.
- Cold baths. Sit in a shallow bath while splashing cold water all over the body. It is important though, not to get a chill.
- Neutral baths. The best anti-stress regimen is regular soaking in water temperatures of 33.5-35.6°C (92-96°F). A 5-10 minute relaxation soak, combined with slow breathing, is the easiest way to calm down an agitated person.
- Steam baths. Sauna, steam or Turkish bath encourages sweating to promote detoxification. Finish off with a cool bath.
- Sitz baths. This is a specialized treatment for skin conditions, and genital and urinary problems. A person is made to sit in a specially designed bath with a mix of warm and cold water.

Most spas offer a choice of water treatments. You may want to consider The Spa (tel. 8503490; 8955858), Oriental Spa (tel. 7508888).

- For silky skin. Apply virgin coco oil all over your body before going to bed. Take 1 tbsp of the same oil one hour before dinner.

Affirmation for the week: "I invoke limitless love, health and joy because every day abundance comes my way."

Love and light!

Thanks to Synchronizity Reflexology Center, Dr. Peter Wong, tel. 8131899

Take Charge Doc!

Dr. Nicky S. Montoya

Take Charge Doc! is your weekly question and answer guide on general health issues and illnesses. MEDICard's Medical Director, Dr. Nicky Montoya answers questions on health through the assistance and expertise of MEDICard's network of accredited specialists. And in a common thrust with the campaigns of the government, Take Charge Doc! parallels its features on the Calendar of Health Events of the Department of Health.

How much food should an infant eat?

It is a known fact that no two individuals are alike. The cliché is, "what may be good for one may not be good for the other". But as far as feeding your baby is concerned, we always have scientific studies to guide us.

Research has shown that the gastric emptying time of infants is from three to four hours after feeding. In accordance, we advise mothers to feed their infants within this time frame. However, their individual experiences have shown that there are some babies who would be hungry one to two hours after eating. Apparently, the three to four hour interval cannot be complied with.

As for the amount of food needed, studies have shown that an infant during his first month can tolerate as much as one to two ounces per feeding and may be increased by increments of one ounce as they grow older. Again, experience has made us realize that there are some infants who consume more to be contented.

A number of factors play a role in the amount of food required by babies, like their metabolic rate, their gastric capacity and their gastric emptying time which may differ among infants. Hence, as I always tell the mothers of my patients, "let your baby guide you, bond with them, observe and stay tuned to their needs and you will know what and how much your baby needs".

Dr. Sharleen M. Corral-Lim provides us with this week's answer to our question on infant healthcare. Dr. Lim, a MEDICard provider for more than three years, addresses the healthcare needs of its members at Manila Adventist Medical Center. Doktora Lim is a graduate of Medicine from the Southwestern University and specializes in Pediatrics, finishing her residency course at Manila Adventist Medical Center, then known as Manila Sanitarium and Hospital. She is married to Tagbilaran City Mayor, Dan Neri Lim and blessed with three children. MEDICard members may visit her clinic at Room 7 for their consultation needs every Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays, from 1 to 4 in the afternoon.

BE HEARD AND BE READ. Write to DR. NICKY S. MONTOYA (c/o *TAKE CHARGE DOC!*) or e-mail him at inquiry@medicardphils.com for inquiries on health matters.

MEDICard PHILIPPINES, INC.: 9/F Sagittarius Bldg., H.V. dela Costa St., Salcedo Village, Makati City 1227 TRUNKLINE: 867-2020 FAX NO.: 894-5720; 810-3855 TEXT: Key in MEDICARD and send to 2344 (Globe and Touch Mobile) or to 4627 (Smart and Talk N' Text) INDIVIDUAL/FAMILY SALES: 818-2161 CORPORATE SALES: 848-6452; 848-6458; 848-6451 E-MAIL: inquiry@medicardphils.com; feedback@medicardphils.com WEBSITE: www.medicardphils.com

PIMS Enrolls to MEDICard HMO Plan

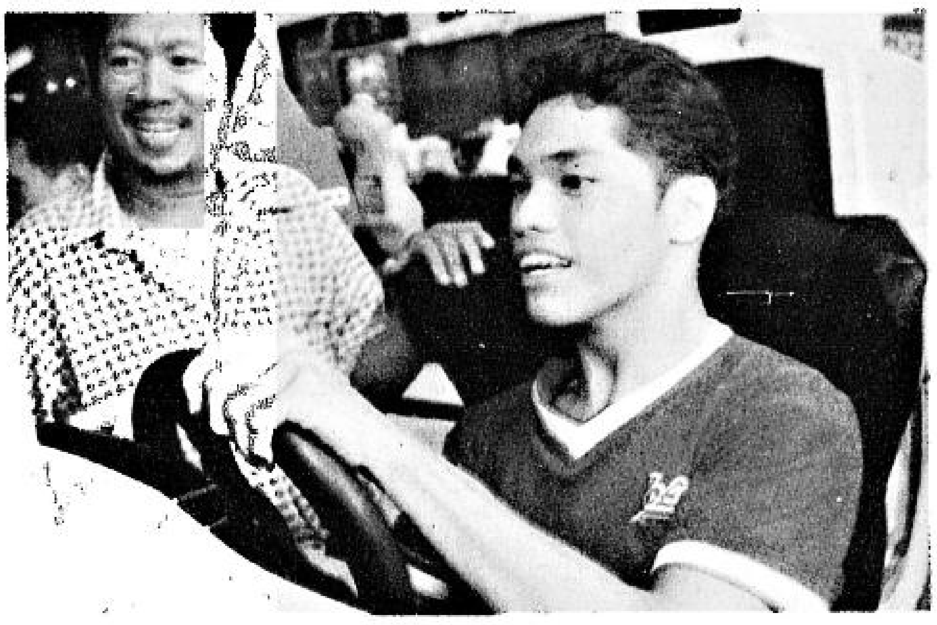
PILIPINAS INTERNATIONAL MARKETING SERVICES, INC., the renowned overseas call center operator for Filipinos abroad recently signed its healthcare agreement with MEDICard. Present during the contract signing were (L-R) Marcel Torres (MEDICard Direct Sales Sr. Mngr.), Dr. Nicanor Montoya (MEDICard Pres.) with showbiz personality Aster Amoyo (PIMS Managing Dir.) and Noel Mendoza (PIMS HRAD Mngr.). (Standing L-R) MEDICard's Cora De Guzman (Membership Consultant), Joan Sabater (Asst. Mngr.-Direct Sales) and Luis Montoya (EVP & GM) with PIMS HR Supervisor, RD Onilo

Playtime for special kids

NINE lucky students/patients of the Philippine Cerebral Palsy Inc. (PCPI), plus their teachers, parents and guardians, comprised the latest group to experience the caring side of Timezone recently.

Part of the nonprofit rehabilitation center's yearly program plan called for a field trip titled Computers All Around Us, an activity designed to give the Cerebral Palsy-stricken kids a taste of the excitement and fun that should be part of any growing child's life.

A GIRL tries out her bowling skills with the help of the "Pro-Striker" machine at Timezone Glorietta 4.



MICHAEL Schumacher wannabes put their driving skills to the test.

"Most of these kids are not well-off. Going for a day at the mall is a luxury for them," explains PCPI administrator Marissa Ong. "These programs allow the kids to go out more, to feel like normal kids."

Pinky Fabro, head of PCPI's computer program, made the arrangements for the visit to Timezone. The hour of free play on the simulator games and the additional free redemption games gave the students the experience of being in a computer gallery, and it turned out to be a bona fide hit.

Some of the games that were very popular with the group were Daytona, Victory Lap and Marine Fishing. The students were also given stuffed toys as souvenirs of their Timezone trip.

Philippine Cerebral Palsy Inc. started as a small clinic at the National Orthopedic Hospital in 1956, and today occupies two buildings in Makati on land provided lease-free by the Ayala Foundation. It is a nonprofit rehabilitation center and school that provides special education for Cerebral Palsy sufferers of all ages.

Timezone centers can be found at Glorietta 2, Glorietta 4, Greenbelt 1 and Greenbelt 3 of Ayala Center, Alabang Town Center Main and Cinema, SM Megamall, Starmall, Metropoint, Greenhills Theater Mall, Pavilion Mall, Ayala Center Cebu, Robinsons Lipa Batangas and the newly opened Market!Market!.

THE IMPROVED Triax version has an even simpler user interface and advanced training and racing functions.

Watches that 'run' with–not against–you

NIKE has added innovative features to its revolutionary line of running watches while keeping the price affordable.

New features of the Triax's first line include giant, readable numbers, easy-to-push buttons and the ergonomic "S" shape. The improved version, which has an even simpler user interface, has advanced training and racing functions to help users concentrate on what they are doing rather than on the timepiece.

The Bowerman Series of Triax running watches were inspired by Bill Bowerman, coach of the University of Oregon's track and field team 1947-1972. An innovator, he was a co-founder of Nike.

Bowerman designed products by listening to athletes. He removed unnecessary details from a product, leaving only the essentials. The Bowerman Series mixes functionality, simplicity and ergonomics, and is reasonably priced.

Some notable innovations of the latest generation of Triax running watches are:

Convertible display allowing flexibility. Users can view lap time, total time or both at once.

Target time eliminates pace guessing so runners can focus on the sprint and not the math. One can enter up to 50 target times—one for every mile, lap or even each loop around the neighborhood. The watch issues an alert when a target time is reached.

The new Triax Speed 100, flagship of the Bowerman line, has a 100-lap memory and a metal bezel. Triax Speed 50 combines performance and affordability with a 50-lap memory. The Triax Speed is pure simplicity and provides essential information. It can store date for up to 10 laps.

All new and improved designs come with the ergonomics and display size that have made Nike the standard in athletic watches. The timepieces are available at all Nike outlets, Time Studio and other authorized Nike Timing retailers nationwide.

Top school produces top doctor

THE UNIVERSITY of the East Ramon Magsaysay Memorial Medical Center (UERMMMC), one of the Philippines' top five medical schools, added another feather on its cap when one of its graduates topped the 2004 Physician Licensure Examination.

Karen Lucero Nielsen, who opted for self-study rather than formal review sessions, got a grade of 84.42. The half-Filipino, half-Danish Nielsen, who was valedictorian in her Medicine class, has expressed determination to practice in the country. She lamented the fact that many Filipino physicians were leaving to practice their profession (some are even shifting to nursing to hasten their employment abroad) elsewhere.

Nielsen plans to specialize in either surgery or internal medicine at her alma mater.

Aside from Nielsen, two of UERMMMC's graduates also topped the recent Physical Therapy board exams. The school has so far received five Exemplary Passing Performance awards from the Professional Regulation Commission.

Among its distinguished alumni are Joven Cuanang, medical director of St. Luke's Medical Center and renowned neurologist; UERMMMC president and top cardiologist Romeo Divinagracia, and liver specialist Erlinda Valdellon, former UERMMMC dean.

UERMMMC College of Medicine dean Georgina Paredes said the school did not rely solely on lectures in its instruction. Instead, it opted for more interactive learning. She added that, in keeping with the innovative curriculum, the most modern medical equipment were used to allow hands-on learning with updated technology.

KAREN Lucero Nielsen with dad Praben and mom Carol

A day for mind and body relaxation

THE FARM at San Benito offers a day package of mind and body relaxation therapy on all Tuesdays and Thursdays from Oct. 12- Nov. 18.

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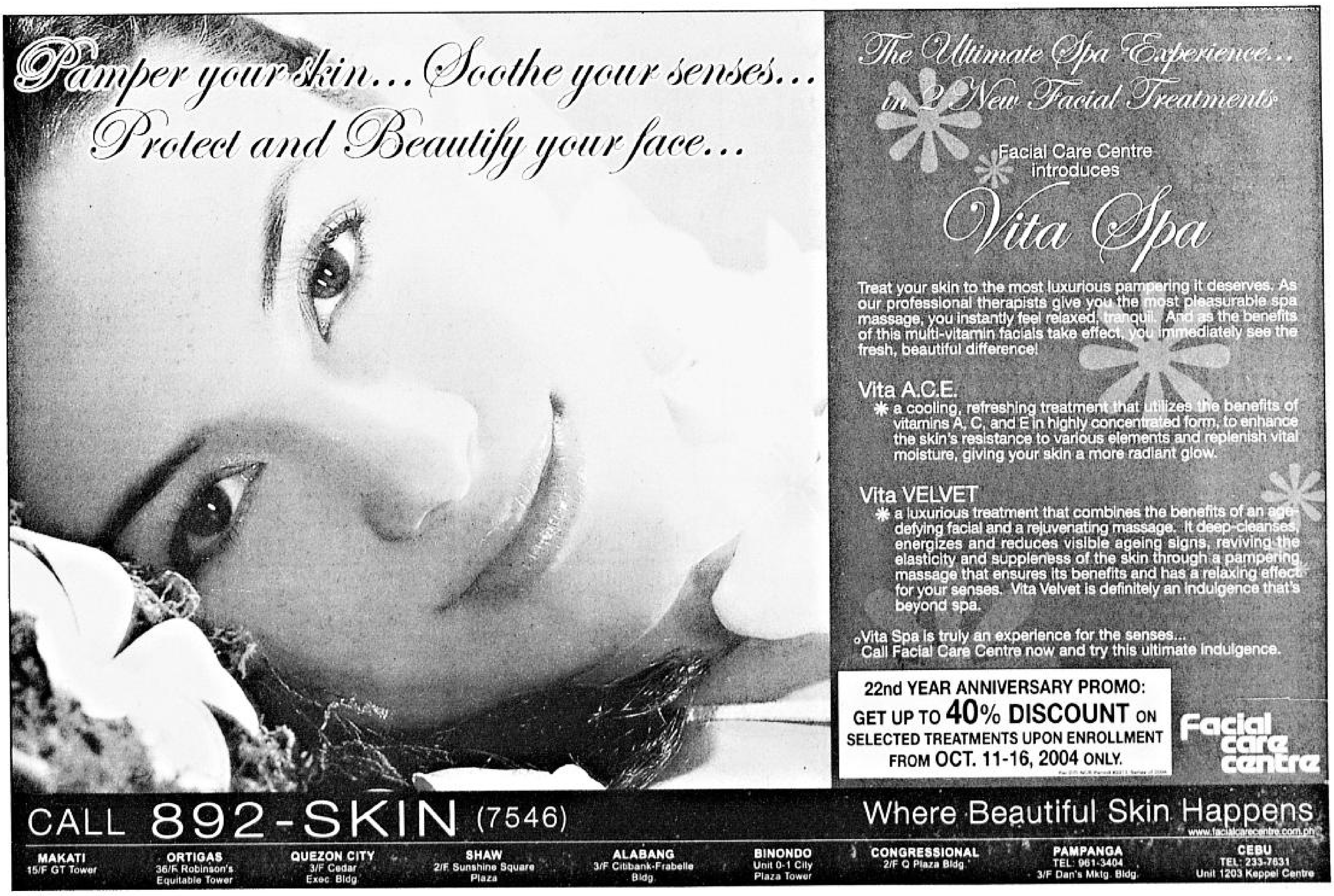

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GABRIELA Zavala of Honduras

TAMERA Mari Szijarto of Philippines

Saving Mother Earth with their beauty

By Armin Adina

SHOW STOPPER

SAVING Mother Nature has never been this filled with beauty.

More than 60 gorgeous women from around the world have gathered in the Philippines to heed the call for protecting the environment, through the Miss Earth pageant which is now on its fourth year.

This year's batch of beauties has the biggest number of representatives so far. Not only is the quantity of delegates higher, so is the quality of the women. Most of the candidates seem to have stepped out of fashion magazines and the swimsuit covers of Sports Illustrated. Even better, many of the women proved to be articulate.

The pageant is organized by Carousel Productions. The winner is set to visit destinations in the Philippines and around the world to participate in ecology projects.

In 2001 when the pageant started, 42 candidates competed for the first crown. Last year, the pageant attracted 57 young women, including a representative from war-torn Afghanistan. This year, with some candidates still expected to arrive in the coming days, the roster could reach 70 this year.

Standouts

The candidates were presented to the media at the poolside of the Intercontinental Manila in Makati City last Thursday. While Miss Mexico stayed in her room due to a minor illness, the contestants paraded in their swimsuits. Each also delivered a short impromptu speech on their environmental advocacy.

One standout is Yanina Gonzalez of Paraguay, who placed third in the Miss Universe pageant last June in Quito, Ecuador.

Peru's Leisel Holler, who looks like our Carmi Martin in the '80s, was also in the Miss Universe pageant. So were Ferehiyewot Merkula of Ethiopia and Raquel Horton of the Bahamas.

Poland's Karolina Gorazda was in the Miss World competition. Priscilla Meirelles may sustain the impressive winning streak of her country, Brazil, which has consistently placed among the Miss Earth pageant's top four.

Europeans, Asians

Erika Niklitschek of Chile and Maria Fernanda Navia of Colombia also earned loud cheers from spectators during the media presentation. Europeans Lida Laato of Finland and Katarina Hadzi-Pavlovic of Serbia and Montenegro are not far behind.

Tamera Marie Szijarto is the Philippine representative. India sent the lovely Jyoti Brahmin. But both women as well as the others should watch out for Korea's Hae-jin Cho and Thailand's Ratchadawan Khampeng whose charms have not gone unnoticed.

The judges will certainly have a hard time choosing the successor of reigning Miss Earth Dania Prince. It could be a back-to-back victory for Honduras this year, if Gabriela Zabala is stunning enough for the judges.

Miss Earth 2004 is presented by Sunsilk, Close-up, Creamsilk and Pond's, in cooperation with Avon Color. The coronation on Oct. 24 at the UP Theater in Diliman, Quezon City, will be aired on ABS-CBN at 9:30 p.m. Cable channel Star World will also televise the event to 35 countries on Nov. 21.

QUANTITY, QUALITY. The pageant attracts the biggest number of candidates in its four years, and brighter, prettier girls at that. ERNIE U. SARMIENTO

FEREHIYEWOT Abebe of Ethiopia

JYOTI Brahmin of India

YANINA Gonzales of Paraguay

Patti, Martin bring their US show to Manila in January

SHOW TIME

WHILE Martin Nievera has performed in the USA with almost every significant Filipino artist in back-to-back concerts, he has yet to pit talents with a big mainstream American artist. Last month, it finally happened at the historic Shrine Auditorium in Los Angeles and at the Rosemont Theater in Chicago as the Philippine concert king performed in a back-to-back concert with one of America's favorite pop jazz artists, Patti Austin.

It was a match made in musical heaven. Martin may have finally found his match in Patti, both musically and in terms of performance style.

"It was a delight to perform with Martin and we had such a great time on stage," Patti said after the show, "because we are both more than just singers, we're entertainers and I'm hoping that our sense of humor gave everyone a great time as well."

Martin and Patti performed the latter's now-classic duets "Baby Come to Me" and "True Love." They also wowed their audiences with a medley of old standards which were given a contemporary jazzy twist.

But among the most anticipated numbers was the Michel Legrand duet "How Do You Keep the Music Playing?" which Patti originally recorded with James Ingram. Martin added his own style to the song so that they came up with a Martin/Patti version of the song.

MARTIN finds Patti a funny soul

PATTI Austin says she loves the spirit of the Filipinos

The concert was truly a proud moment for the Fil-Am audience who witnessed the Filipino singing with one of America's music icons. Even Patti's own management group was impressed by Martin's talent, professionalism and generosity as a performer.

But for many people who came to see the show, Patti was also a major revelation. Oliver Dacanay, a columnist of the "American-Asian Peoples Journal" who had never seen Patti perform, commented, "This crooner with an immaculate, soothing and effortless voice is a music lover's delight. She made me an instant fan."

Patti, who considers the Philippines one of her favorite concert destinations, felt right at home with the predominantly Pinoy audience in L.A. and Chicago.

"I love the spirit of the Filipinos," the New York-born singer gushed. "I love their smiles. I love their enthusiasm for life and their hospitality. They always make me feel like all the hard work I've put into my career really meant something for them."

Having performed in Manila at least six times over the last 10

PATTI/2

SeeeMall!

AYALA CINEMAS

THX

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ATC ALABANG TOWN CENTER	G1 GLORIETTA 1	G4 GLORIETTA 4		GB3 GREENBELT 3	ACC AYALA CENTER CEBU
1 SHARK TALE	1 THE PUNISHER	1 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE	5 WHITE CHICKS	GUARANTEED SEATS 1 SHARK TALE 1:15, 3:15, 5:15, 7:15, 9:15, 11:15	1 SHARK TALE
2 WIMBLEDON	2 WHITE CHICKS	2 WIMBLEDON	6 SHARK TALE	GUARANTEED SEATS 2 FAHRENHEIT 9/11 1:00, 3:10, 10:30	2 OPEN WATER
3 THE PUNISHER	3 FENG SHUI	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE PUNISHER 12:30, 3:00, 5:30, 8:00, 10:30	7 OPEN WATER	GUARANTEED SEATS 3 THE PUNISHER 1:20, 3:50, 6:20, 8:50, 11:20	3 SAVED
4 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE	4 SHARK TALE	4 THE BOURNE SUPREMACY		GUARANTEED SEATS 4 WIMBLEDON 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:20, 9:25, 11:30	4 RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE
5 OPEN WATER				GUARANTEED SEATS 5 OPEN WATER 2:15, 4:30, 6:45, 9:00, 11:15	5 13 GOING ON 30

GB1 GREENBELT 1
1 SPANISH FILM FESTIVAL For inquiries, call 526-1446
2 SHARK TALE 12:15, 2:15, 4:15, 6:15, 8:15

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AYALA CINEMAS

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FOR OCTOBER 11 & 12

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GLORIETTA 4 - 1:10 pm, 3:30, 5:50, 8:10, 10:30

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SM City Manila Cinema 12
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 5

FAHRENHEIT 9/11 MTRCB Rating: PG 13

SM City Fairview Cinema 3
SM Southmall Cinema 10
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 6

MTRCB RATING: PG 13 **OPEN WATER**

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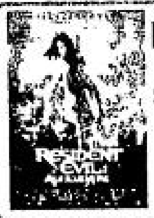
SM Supercenter Sucat Cinema 3
SM City Manila Cinema 7
SM City North Edsa Cinema 6
SM Megamall Cinema 5
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 10
SM Southmall Cinema 3
SM City Fairview Cinema 9

THE PUNISHER MTRCB Rating: R 13

SM City Fairview Cinema 5
SM Megamall Cinema 10
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 8
SM City Southmall Cinema 8
SM Tutuban Cinema 2
SM City North Edsa Cinema 4
SM City Manila Cinema 1

MTRCB Rating GP **RAISING HELEN**

SM Southmall Cinema 5
SM Megamall Cinema 11



RESIDENT EVIL MTRCB Rating:R13

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SM City Tutuban Cinema 1
SM City Fairview Cinema 4
SM City Bicutan Cinema 4
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 3
SM City Southmall Cinema 9
SM City Manila Cinema 4
SM City North Edsa Cinema 8
SM Megamall Cinema 4

MTRCB Rating: G **SHARK TALE**

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SM City Fairview Cinema 8
SM City Tutuban Cinema 4
SM Sucat Cinema 2
SM City Sta. Mesa Cinema 5
SM City Southmall Cinema 4
SM City Manila Cinema 2
SM City North Edsa Cinema 2
SM City Bicutan Cinema 3

SECRET WINDOW MTRCB Rating: R13

SM City Fairview Cinema 1
SM City Manila Cinema 3
SM Megamall Cinema 12

SUBJECT TO MTRCB RATING **WIMBLEDON**

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SM CINEMA

Patti, Martin bring...

From page 1

years, Patti is considered one of the most consistent big sellers in the Philippines. "People in Manila know all my songs and that makes me feel like my music has truly touched them," she said.

Martin professes to being a huge Patti Austin fan. "Never in my wildest dreams did it occur to me that I would be doing a back-to-back tour with her," he said. "It's *nakakakilig*!"

'Late @ Night'

He recalled that the one and only time the two of them met was at the set of his late-night talk show on ABS-CBN, when Patti did a promotional guest appearance in 1997. "When she guested on 'Martin Late @ Night,' she had just gotten off the plane so she was exhausted," said Martin. "But after a couple of questions about our common hometown in the Bay area, she kicked her shoes off and lay on the couch. It was smooth sailing all the way!

"She is a funny, free-spirited soul with a great sense of humor, and boy, can she sing!"

Patti remembers that very same moment with equal relish. "Martin is such a friendly, engaging person," she said. "He welcomed me on his show as if we were long time friends and that made me feel so good!"

Martin, still piping hot from his very successful headlining stint in Las Vegas, had hoped "that Patti and I can help each other when our worlds come together, joined by a song or two."

Patti herself was thrilled about the possibilities of this unique experience. "It is always so wonderful to engage the music of another culture," she said. "I have sung in different languages in the past and I have always found it both challenging and rewarding. Love songs are the most fun because the emotions are so beautiful in any language."

All-American

The two artists were backed by an all-American band that was led by Manila-based musical director Lorrie Ilustre.

Filipinos are in for a treat when Patti Austin and Martin Nievera bring their show to the Philippines early next year. Already scheduled is a performance at the Araneta Coliseum on Saturday, Jan. 29, 2005. They will be at the Waterfront Cebu City Hotel a day earlier, on Jan. 28.

Tickets are now available and reservations are being accepted. A 10-percent discount is being offered to early birds only until the end of October.

For ticket reservation, call Ticketnet at 911-5555. For ticket inquiries, call MaxiMedia International at 551-7777.

'PEACE WAVE'
The best of Korean pop talents perform with the country's best OPM singers in "Peace Wave" on Oct. 26 and 27 at the Amazing Philippine Theater at the Manila Film Center, CCP complex. OPM stars Freddie Aguilar, Sarah Geronimo, Jay-R, Nina and Sheryn Regis represent the Philippines. The Korean superstars are Diva, Ja Jun Guo, Tan Pung Kheong, Jewelry, JK Kim Dung Uk, Maya, Mina, Mui, Sae Bum, UK, US, V.O.S, and Yeonhang Sketch. Signing the concert contract are (From left) Freddie Aguilar, Amazing Philippine Theater VP Casie Villlarosa, Amazing Philippine Theater president Iron Chang, Arnold Vegafria representing Jay-R, and overall events director Emmie Domingo. For tickets, call Ticketworld, or 833-5758.

Marilyn Monroe nude on $200 bottle of wine

LOS ANGELES—A California vintner specializing in wines whose labels bear images of Marilyn Monroe has launched a 2002 vintage featuring the late actress's famous 1949 nude photo that appeared in the centerfold of the first issue of Playboy Magazine.

Prices are $200 for a single 1.5 liter bottle, and $1,000 for a set of three bottles, including velvet-lined fitted display cases.

Marilyn Wines, a division of Nova Wines Inc., of St. Helena in central California's Napa Valley, is putting the new vintage out in its "Red Velvet" series. "The 2002 vintage of this wine is the first release of the collection and is available in beautifully boxed, individually numbered magnum bottles," says the vintner's Web page.

In addition to the latest offering, the company also markets wines bearing photos of Monroe in her early days when she was still Norma Jean Baker. *AFP*

A kid in a very big candy store

From page 4

the X-Men in a contemporary setting.

Cross-pollination

Now, Marvel is re-launching many of their core titles, such as "Avengers," "Iron Man" and "Captain America," written by a corps of comic's brightest: Brian Michael Bendis, Warren Ellis, Ed Brubaker and Kurt Busiek, among others. This re-launch, commencing in November, is key to Marvel's future, as is the Ultimate series.

Along the way, Arad believes that quality comic books will result in a kind of cross-pollination, where the comics will provide the material for slew of other products: movies, video games, toys and so on. "The source is still the comic books, but you spread it and adapt it all throughout the different media entities we want to exploit," Arad says.

The product foremost in Avi Arad's mind these days is "The Punisher." The movie, he says, talks about heroism in the world and context we live in.

"We have a lot of Frank Castles out there. Most of us, we won't step in, but his strategy is not that he's coming in to take revenge, but he's coming in to mete out punishment. At the end of the day, he's discovered a reason to live despite the personal tragedy. Surviving takes a lot of courage. There are more people out there who could use the help of Frank Castle."

For Avi Arad and for Marvel, it's yet another chance to start something big.

Columbia Pictures' "The Punisher" is showing in Metro Manila theaters.

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WIMBLEDON PG13 12:30,2:50,5:10,7:30,9:50	PUNISHER 2 R13 12:00,2:30,5:00,7:30,10:00	SHARK TALE GP 1:40,3:40

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② PUNISHER
(R-13)

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3	OPEN WATER 11:00, 1:05, 3:15, 5:15 7:20, 9:25, 11:10 PG-13
4	THE PUNISHER 11:55, 2:45, 5:35 8:25, 11:10 R-13

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R13

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Araneta Center
ENTERTAINMENT GUIDE

ALI MALL CINEPLEX

3	Dolby	SHARK TALE 12:10 pm 2:20 pm 4:30 pm 6:40 pm 8:55 pm
4	SDDS	FENG SHUI 11:35 am 1:55 pm 4:15 pm 6:35 pm 8:55 pm
5	dts	RESIDENT EVIL: APOCALYPSE 11:55 am 2:10 pm 4:25 pm 6:45 pm 8:55 pm
6	Dolby	OPEN WATER 11:05 am 1:05 pm 3:05 pm 5:05 pm 7:05 pm 9:05 pm
7	Dolby	THE PUNISHER 1:00 pm 3:40 pm 6:20 pm 9:00 pm

ARANETA COLISEUM

Oct 13	SAN MIGUEL vs GINEBRA 7:20 pm
Oct 16	JASMINE TRIAS CONCERT
Oct 17	ALASKA vs FEDEX 6:30 pm
Oct 20	SAN MIGUEL vs SHELL 7:20 pm
Oct 24	GINEBRA vs SHELL 6:30 pm
Oct 27	FEDEX vs COKE 7:20 pm
Dec 11	JULIO IGLESIAS CONCERT
Dec 25	DISNEY ON ICE : Princess Classics

For tickets, call TicketNet at 911-5555

THEATER MOVIE GUIDE

MANILA

EASTERN	
MAXIM	CLOSED
MIRAMAR	SEX BOMB / RAMPADORA
ODEON	X-MEN 2
ODEON-2	BUKID AY BASA / KASIBULAN
ROBEN	BOLD STAR
TANDEM-1	SUGAT
TANDEM-2	KATAWAN MO LANGIT KO
TIMES	SPY / LEGEND OF CROCODILE

QUEZON CITY

ACT-1	SENSUAL ISLAND
ACT-2	KAYA KO PERO MASAKIT
ACT-3	ORIGINAL SIN
ACT-4	HANGGANG KAILAN KA PAPATAY
CORONET A	HIBLA / MAPANUKSO
CORONET B	A MAN APART
QUEZON-1	BERTUD NG PUTIK
REMAR	X-MEN 2
REMAR-2	BOLD STAR

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A	KERIDA
B	CLOSED
C	

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CINEMA-5 (DTS)	RAISING HELEN
CINEMA-6	VIP ROOM (RE-ISSUE)
CINEMA-7	EXORCIST THE BEGINNING
CINEMA-8	ANACONDAS
CINEMA-9 (DTS)	RESIDENT EVIL APOCALYPSE
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CINEMA-14	WIMBLEDON
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CINEMA 1 THX	THE PUNISHER	11:20, 2:00, 4:40, 7:20, 10:00
2	SHARK TALE	11:10, 1:20, 3:30, 5:40, 7:50, 10:00
3	OPEN WATER	11:55, 1:55, 3:55, 7:55, 10:00
4	SHARK TALE	10:40, 12:50, 3:00, 5:10, 7:20, 9:30
5	WHITE CHICKS Sneak Preview	
6	WIMBLEDON	10:20, 12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
7	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
8	FENG SHUI	12:40, 3:00, 5:20, 7:40, 10:00
9	RESIDENT EVIL 2	10:45, 1:00, 3:15, 5:30, 7:45, 10:00
10	RAISING HELEN	11:00, 1:45, 4:30, 7:15, 10:00

Regular Price: P150 THX / P95/65 for two levels cinemas / P95 for one level cinemas

ERMITA 536-7809 to 12

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	SHARK TALE	11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50
2	OPEN WATER	10:30, 12:20, 2:10, 4:00, 5:50, 7:40, 9:30
3	WIMBLEDON	11:10, 1:30, 3:50, 6:10, 8:20, 10:00
4	WHITE CHICKS Sneak Preview	
5	THE PUNISHER	11:05, 1:40, 4:15, 6:50, 9:40
6	FENG SHUI	10:35, 12:50, 3:05, 5:20, 7:35, 9:50
7	RESIDENT EVIL 2	11:00, 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, 7:40, 9:50

METRO EAST 682-8193/99 / 682-8280

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	OPEN WATER	10:50, 12:50, 2:50, 4:50, 6:50, 9:00
2	WHITE CHICKS Sneak Preview	
3	FENG SHUI	11:20, 1:40, 4:10, 6:30, 9:00
4	RAISING HELEN	11:00, 1:30, 4:00, 6:30, 9:00
5	SHARK TALE	10:50, 12:50, 2.50, 4:50, 6:50, 8:50, 10:30
6	WIMBLEDON	10:50, 12:50, 2.50, 4:50, 6.50, 8:50, 10:30
7	THE PUNISHER	11:20, 2:10, 5:00, 7:50, 10:30
8	RESIDENT EVIL 2	10:25, 12.50, 3:15, 5:40, 8:05, 10:30

NOVALICHES 935-3229 / 31

Cinema	Movie	Times
1	WHITE CHICKS Sneak Preview	
2	OPEN WATER	10:30, 12:20, 2:10, 4.00, 5:50, 7:30, 8:55
3	FENG SHUI	10:15, 12.45, 3.15, 5:45, 8:30
4	SHARK TALE	11:45, 1:55, 4.05, 6:15, 8:30
5	THE PUNISHER	11:00, 1:30, 4.00, 6.30, 8.55
6	RESIDENT EVIL 2	11.00, 1:20, 3:40, 6.00, 8:25
7	RAISING HELEN	1.00, 3:30, 6:00, 8:30
8	THE BOURNE SUPREMACY	11.00, 1:20, 3:40, 6:00, 8:30

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Cinema	Movie
1	GODSEND
2	FENG SHUI
3	SHARK TALE
4	JANDARA

CAINTA 240-4661

Cinema	Movie
1	OPEN WATER
2	THE PUNISHER
3	SHARK TALE
4	FENG SHUI

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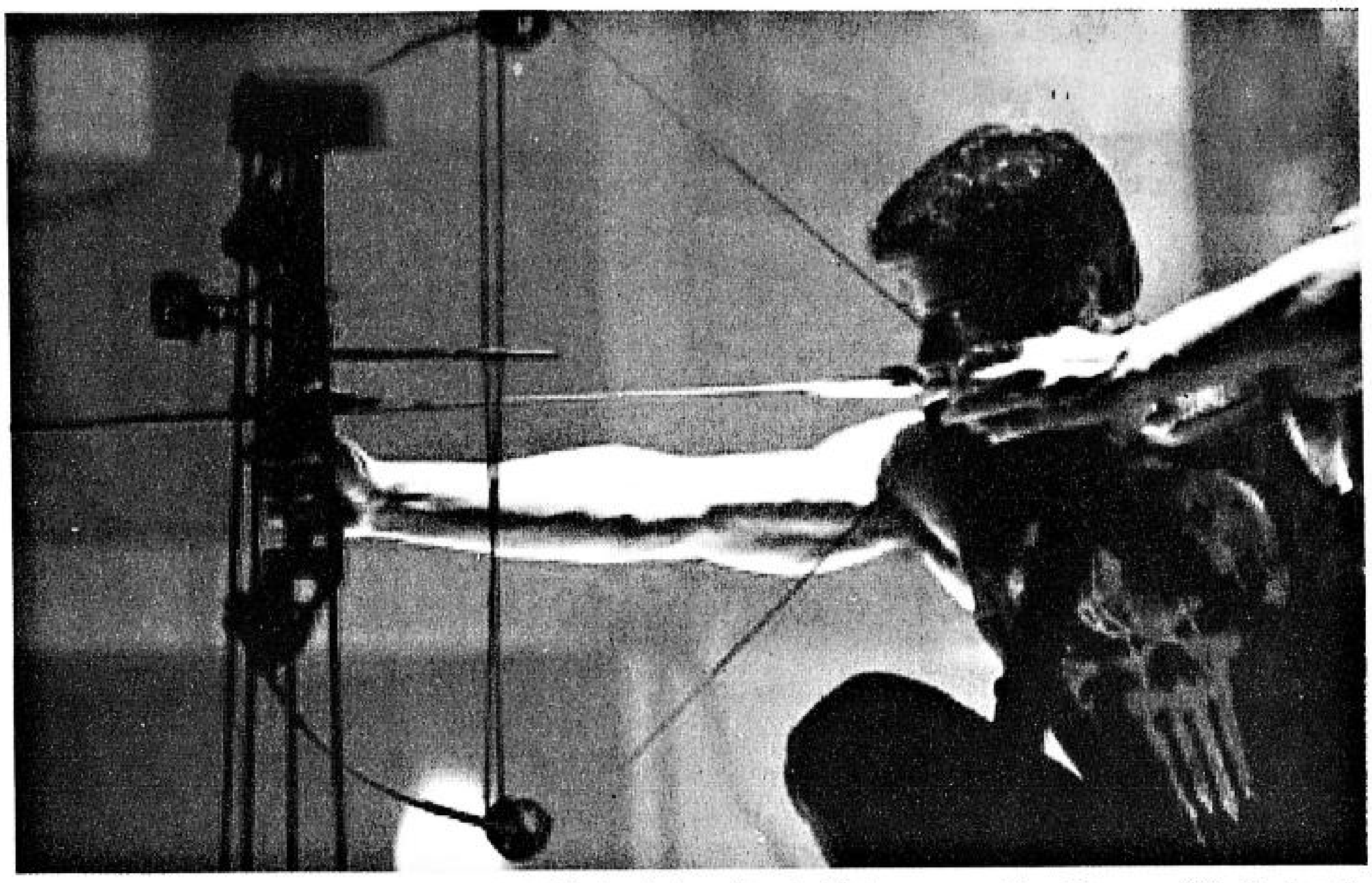


"'THE PUNISHER' is a big part of the Marvel Universe," according to Avi Arad

MARVEL STUDIOS CEO

A kid in a very big candy store

By Ruel S. De Vera

Fresh off the worldwide smash 'Spider-Man 2,' Marvel Studios CEO Avi Arad explains how 'The Punisher' and other comic-based movies tie in with his vision for the entertainment giant's future

INQUIRER EXCLUSIVE

HE is one of the most powerful men in comics and movies and yet Avi Arad, president and chief executive officer of Marvel Studios, is very sure about the best perk that comes with his job.

"I get free books," Arad says instantly in an exclusive phone interview with INQUIRER Entertainment. "I get to do everything I like—toys, videogames, publishing. I'm like a kid in a candy store."

A very big and important candy store. Aside from his top jobs at Marvel Studios, Arad is also chief creative officer at Marvel Entertainment Group, the umbrella entity that includes Marvel Studios and Marvel Comics. Arad, born in Israel in 1948, was part of Toy Biz when he began collaborating with Marvel, and gained greater control and responsibility when Toy Biz acquired Marvel in 1998.

He's kept busy since, overseeing Marvel's growing toy and video game concerns as well as developing properties for television, such as the animated "X-Men" and "Spider-Man" shows, and even found time to create the live-action "Mutant X" TV series.

But it is in movies that Arad has made the difference for Marvel.

Beginning with 1998's "Blade," where he served as executive producer, Arad has effectively led Marvel's charge into the multiplex, shepherding Marvel's precious properties into box office blockbusters such as 2000's "X-Men" and 2002's "Spider-Man."

Arad is currently on a hot streak, with the international success of "X2: X-Men United" and "Spider-Man 2."

The Punisher

Now Arad is pushing into another Marvel character into cinemas—albeit a slightly different one. The titular character in Columbia Pictures' "The Punisher" has no super-powers. Frank Castle is a deadly gun-toting vigilante who first appeared in the pages of "The Amazing Spider-Man" in 1979, eventually becoming a major property for Marvel. Not even a kitschy1989 adaptation, with muscleman Dolph Lundgren in the title role, could torpedo the character's upward trajectory.

But this "Punisher," directed by Jonathan Hensleigh, draws heavily from the Punisher material from the edgy and talented creative team of Garth Ennis and Steve Dillon.

Arad, who serves as a producer on the film, thinks the movie will win over audiences because of its focus: "'The Punisher' is a big part of the Marvel Universe. We have characters who have super-powers, who are superheroes, and we have characters who are just heroes. Vigilante is a term that can mean that they take the law into their own hands. What makes him a unique character is how he reflects the way we all feel about that."

Arad notes, "The Punisher' is one of the top franchises we have, one with a huge following. Many people like the idea, believe it or not. This movie is a throwback to movies like 'Death Wish.'"

He says the movie is faithful to the comic book. "Many of the fun fights in the movie are straight out of 'Welcome Back Frank,'" he says, referring to the Ennis-penned story arc.

Arad also explains that Tom Jane (previously seen in "Deep Blue Sea" and "Dreamcatcher") was a good choice to don the skull-adorned shirt, notably Jane's first solo lead role.

Director's defection

Marvel Studios has a virtual Avengers-style lineup of movies coming out, with Wesley Snipes returning as the Daywalker in "Blade: Trinity" due out this year, "Elektra: Assassin" (with Jennifer Garner reprising her role from "Daredevil") due out next year. In fact, Marvel has everything from "Iron Man" and "The Fantastic Four" to "Werewolf by Night" and "Man-Thing" in the pipeline. It's a process that Arad pays close attention to.

"We have a lot of characters that deserve to see the screen and one by one, we develop them, try to make them different from one another," he explains. "If you look at "Blade: Trinity," it's the third one and I think it will be the best of the three. "Spider-Man 2" did very well and so did "X2."

"We develop our franchises very carefully by finding the right cast and the right origin story. The "Fantastic Four" movie we are shooting now is quite comedic. It's full of action but also has a lot of fun in it. We're about to start "Ghost Rider" with Sony and, again, it's very different from anything else you've seen from Marvel.

"The direction is to keep making good movies. The idea is that, if they're good, they will last and people will come to see them, and there you have a franchise."

He even notes that the high-profile defection of "X-Men" and "X2: X-Men United" director Bryan Singer to helm the upcoming "Superman" movie hasn't slowed down work on the third X-Men film, due out in 2006. "It didn't affect it at all. The release is on time. The script is being written. There is a slate of directors who are interested in doing the movie.

"With us, sequels really aren't sequels. Sequels stand on their own. As you can tell from our track record, we find ways of improving our movies and then move on. Therefore, we get interest from directors who look at it as a great opportunity to direct the X-men, to tell this story. We're very excited that we have something special. And Bryan went on to do something different and that's OK."

A way of life

Along those lines, Arad says there is also nothing unusual about the fact that the follow-up to this year's amazing "Spider-Man 2" won't be swinging into theaters until 2007.

"'Spider-Man" was a big movie, with a big story and big effects," he clarifies. "The second one we did in two years and it was very difficult. We managed to do it. It's the right thing. It should take three years to deliver it. It's the way we want it."

All this, Arad explains, reinforces his love for his company and the characters he gets to work with. "For me, Marvel is a way of life. I've been involved with Marvel all my life, though we bought the company in '98. I couldn't think of anything better to do. We have great characters and we enjoy success with these characters in movies, comics, video games, television and animation. Every time we put out a movie, more and more fans come into our universe and realize what great literature this is."

In that area, he credits Marvel Comics Editor in Chief Joe Quesada with restoring the House of Ideas' proud standing in the industry: "Joe is a very good friend of mine and an amazing artist and we are very close because we think from the same point of view. I consider him my partner and he has a very hard job because in the 1990s, people became concerned primarily with art. And when Joe came in he was able to bring artists and writers together with the kind of atmosphere conducive to the creative process. So Joe is invaluable to Marvel."

For all ages

It all boils down to the comic books themselves, the source material for all that Arad develops, so he keeps a close eye on developments there. And a lot has been changing over at Marvel.

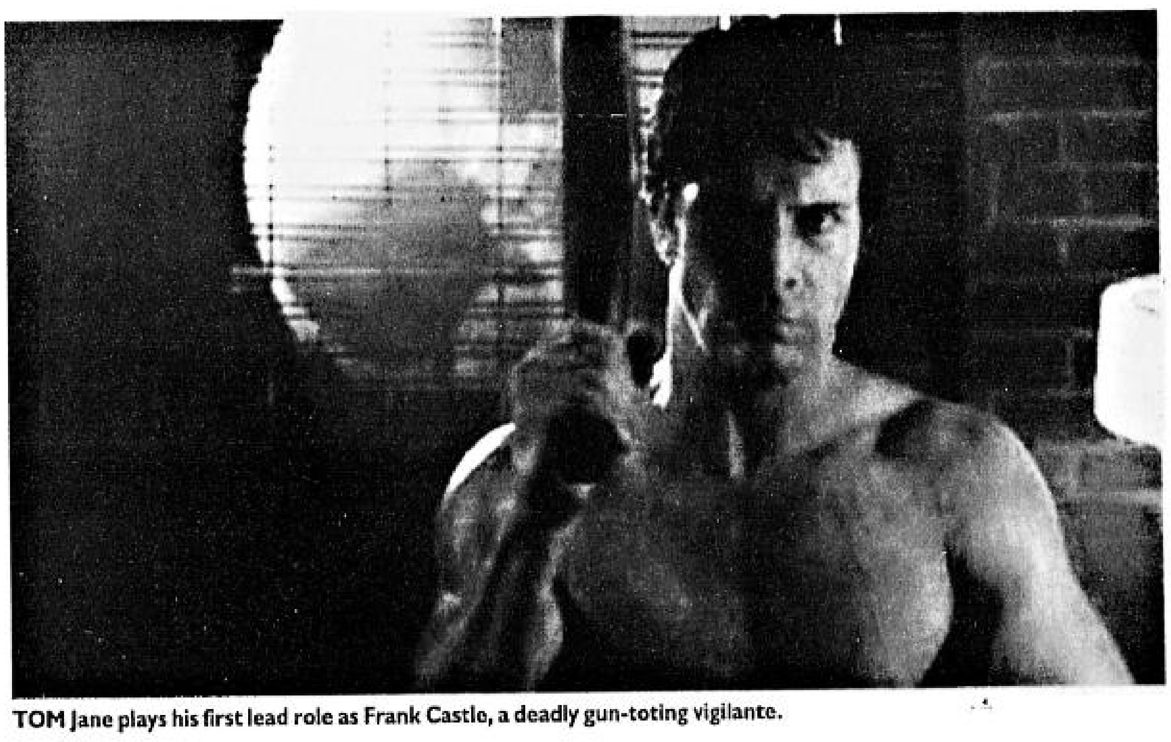
One is the scaling back of the mature readers' MAX imprint: "With regards to MAX, there was a period in comics, two or three years ago, when things got a little extreme for my taste. There were things about MAX that I didn't like, like the Nick Fury book. The thing that happened to MAX that I didn't like is that it became violent just for the sake of being violent."

Then there is Marvel's recent spawning of its Marvel Age line, a progression of comic books aimed for readers of all ages. Arad considers getting the young readers back into the comic book habit an important move for Marvel: "When comics began a long time ago, kids could read them. By going back to the younger kids and making books that are appropriate for them, like Marvel Age, we want to get the younger kids back in there.

"Right now, the kids discover our characters in the movies and, earlier, in animation and in video games. The average age of our readers now is 16 so we'd like to go younger than that."

The Marvel think-tank is not averse to taking chances. The last few years have brought readers the Ultimate line, featuring younger, reimagined versions of characters such as Spider-Man and

A KID/ 3



TOM Jane plays his first lead role as Frank Castle, a deadly gun-toting vigilante.

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